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The Mockingbird

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The Mockingbird

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MOCKING BIRD



MOCKINGBIRD

VOLUME 23

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

APRIL 1997

JUDGES

Mark Jarman served as this year's poetry judge. He is a poet and professor at Vanderbilt University. Mr. Jarman's poetry and essays have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Hudson Review*, *The American Review*, and various other publications. His awards include an Academy of American Poets Prize, three NEA grants in poetry, and a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship.

Cameron Judd, a full-time novelist, judged this year's fiction category. Judd, a resident of Green County, Tennessee, has published historical novels, such as *The Border Men*, *Boone*, and *Crockett of Tennessee*. Mr. Judd has recently signed a contract with St. Martin's Press for a new series of historical novels.

Jane Woodside, editor of ETSU's *Now & Then* magazine, served as this year's non-fiction judge. She has strong ties to the South, having lived in the area for almost twenty years. Ms. Woodside was co-editor with Susan Eike Spalding of *Communities in Motion*, and she has written numerous articles for *Now & Then*. She started her career as an editorial assistant and reporter for *Business Week* in the mid-1970's.

Nancy Toolan, artist in residence at Washington College Academy, judged this year's art submissions. She was commissioned to create a design for the Robert Louis Stevenson Gate in Edinburgh, Scotland. Toolan has displayed her work in the U.S., Taiwan, Eastern Europe, and Scotland. Nancy holds a M.F.A. from Edinburgh College of Art, School of Sculpture. Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland.

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WHO'S WHO IN THE MOCKINGBIRD

Jason Johnson Second Place Fiction

Farmer. Drag-racer. Rock-n-roll bassist. Sales clerk. Bus driver. Paratrooper. Medic. Bartender. Free-ranging traveler. Deadhead. And, most recently, aspiring English scholar and writer. All of these titles have, at one time or another, fit twenty-eight year-old J. Parker Johnson. Currently working on an MA in English here at ETSU, Parker moved to Johnson City from Hawaii, where he completed a three-and-a-half year stint as an Army Medical Service Corps officer. He was born in North Carolina and has lived in many places across the United States, including Texas, Louisiana, and Washington state. His travels have taken him to Korea, the Phillipines, Mexico, and Canada, as well as most of the fifty states. Parker is due to graduate in May '97, after which he plans to move to California, where he hopes to find a job writing and editing for a travel-related publication.

Lori McCallister First Place Fiction

Lori McCallister was born in Nashville, Tenn.. After receiving a BS in Physics from Furman University, she changed the direction of her education and is now pursuing an MA in English at ETSU. Lori serves as a Lieutenant in the Army Reserves and also works as a Teaching Assistant with the Governor's School for Tennessee Heritage. She plans to earn a Ph.D. and teach at the university level. Her interests include hiking, rafting, skiing, and working with dogs.

Eric R. Fish First, Second Place Poetry

Eric Fish received his BS in English from ETSU in 1993. He has completed the course-work towards his MA in English and will begin prose work for his creative thesis during the spring semester of 1997. This is Eric's third appearance in *Mockingbird*, with prior submissions printed in the 1993 and 1996 editions. Fish works and lives in Bristol, Tennessee. When he is not reading, writing, working, or sleeping, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Lisa, and mutilating perfectly good pieces of wood with his cool power tools.

Vince Singleton Second Place Non-Fiction

Vince Singleton graduated with honors from Emory & Henry College in 1983 with a BA in English. He then worked nearly six years at the *Bristol Herald-Courier*. The Bristol, Virginia native won two first-place awards from the Tennessee Press Association. Singleton worked two and a half years as senior police reporter for the *Knoxville Journal*, which provided bulk material for "Dead Lines." Then, after another five years at *Kingsport Times-News*, he quit to pursue an MA in English at ETSU. Mr. Singleton wrote "Dead Lines" following the death of a close friend in January 1996.

Michael Brickell First Place Non-Fiction

Michael Brickell grew up in the small town of Valley City, North Dakota. Having survived the mortar fire of his youth, he eventually ended up in Rogersville, Tennessee. After working for two years, he headed back to school. Michael is majoring in English and minoring in Computer Science and Philosophy at ETSU. He shares an apartment with his brother, Sean, and a cat, Miss Chief, in Johnson City.

Jeanette Henry Second Place Photography

Jeanette Henry was born in Euclid, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, where she lived for 23 years before moving to the Johnson City area. After graduating high school in Ohio, she attended a small college close to home where she earned an Associates Degree in Commercial Art. Not long after moving to Tennessee she began to pursue her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at East Tennessee State University. Currently she is a junior majoring in Graphic Design, and she hopes that some day she will be working in an advertising agency where she can incorporate her design, layout, and illustration skills into her work. Last year Jeanette was part of the committee chosen to work on the design and layout of the *Mockingbird*. She feels it was a great experience that taught her a lot.

Karen Phelps Second Place Illustration

Karen Phelps received a degree in Biology and Psychology and a minor in art. She plans to enter a Medical Illustration school and later obtain a position in the field.

WHO'S WHO IN THE MOCKINGBIRD

Michael Roller First Place Photography

Michael Roller was born a military brat in Ft. Campbell, Kentucky and resided there for two years until his family moved back to Johnson City. Roller, a 1992 graduate from Daniel Boone High School, became interested in the visual arts at a very young age and kept this interest through high school. Michael is a nationally published and award-winning photographer and is currently working as a freelance graphic designer/photographer and plans to graduate in December 1997 with a BFA in Graphic Design.

Brian S. Fletcher First Place Printmaking

Brian S. Fletcher was born in Huntington, West Virginia. He is a graduate student majoring in Printmaking. Fletcher plans to compete for a tenure track position and teach at the university level.

Roger Blanton First Place Illustration

Roger Blanton was born in Louisville, Kentucky. He is a junior majoring in Graphic Design/Illustration. Blanton's immediate goal after graduation is to secure a position with a graphic design firm. He eventually wishes to pursue a career in computer special effects with movie production.

Tiffany Stewart Second Place Drawing

Tiffany Stewart, a native of Johnson City, Tennessee, is a senior majoring in Weaving and Drawing. After graduation, she plans to enter graduate school to pursue an MFA in Fiber Drawing. This training will allow the possibility of a university teaching position.

MOCKINGBIRD



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FIRST PLACE
POETRY



FIREFLIES

There used to be a sinkhole, with brambles
and a gnarled tree, that minded
its own business across the way
from me.

The hole did not produce much but weeds
and fireflies. So they dozed, they graded
and planted yellow grass that began to feed
some cows.

And the fireflies that used to climb
and dance in my front pine tree
declined in number and left my mind
alone with Mr. Beam.

I pissed and moaned and went about my way,
and life went on to duller days.
I forgot about the fireflies
and way led on to way.

Then one day I climbed the hill
to talk to the landlord man who
lived alone in an old farmhouse
that gave off a summer chill.

He made me sit and talked about the days
that passed him rightly by; he pointed
beyond his rusted fence to a place across the way
where he said the apple trees once swayed
before his daddy gave the land away.

He said, "*I remember when Jinny and me
woke up to a fog before the dawn.
We sneaked to papaw's apple grove
and climbed up the biggest tree. And there
we waited among the smoky apple trees.*"

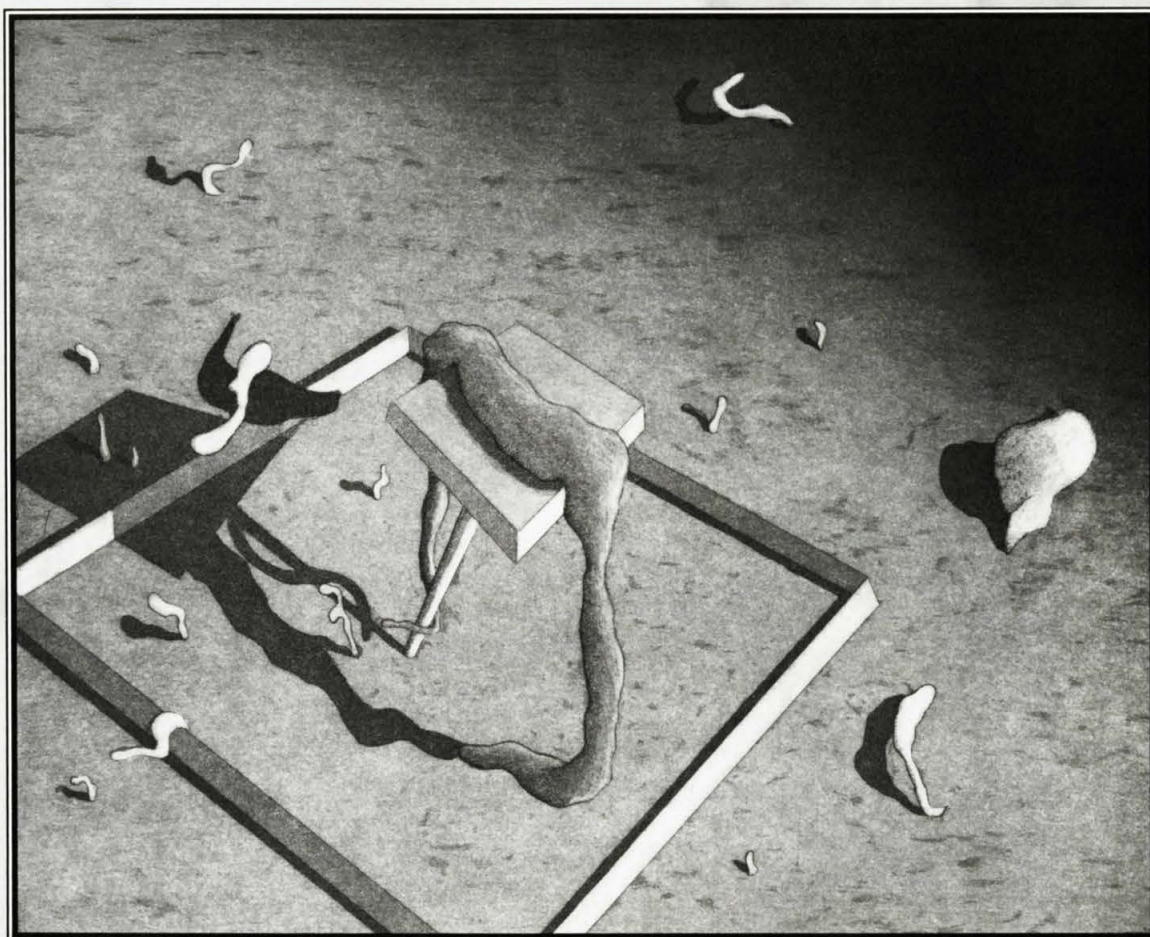
*Along came deer that stopped below and ate
right off the ground. And there we watched
without a breath, until, someone made a sound
and we watched them scamper, not so scared,
and disappear past where your house now sits
right over there."*

Eric R. Fish

FIRST PLACE
PRINTMAKING



ANXIETY



7 3/4" x 9 1/2"

Brian S. Fletcher

FIRST PLACE
ILLUSTRATION



PROJECTORHEAD?!!



19 3/4" x 14"

Roger Blanton

FIRST PLACE
FICTION



THE EXPERIMENT

The bills were stacked high on John's desk at the end of the semester. He wasn't too worried about the money. During the past week he had been able to earn about \$50 doing some typing for friends, and he had picked up an extra shift at the restaurant. Asking his parents for some money now was impossible because he was planning to get them to help pay next semester's tuition. Because John needed only about a hundred more dollars, he figured he'd check the job list at school to see if there were any openings. While sealing the last bill and placing a stamp on it, he decided that he would pay the credit card next week, after he had earned some more cash. He grabbed a heavy coat and walked out the door.

When John arrived on campus, he walked into the post office and dropped the bills into the slot. He walked over to the bulletin board where odd jobs were posted and saw a notice for some typing, but they needed it done yesterday. There was another notice for help in the university library for a couple of days, but that was for this coming week and he would still be working at the restaurant before it closed for renovation. What he needed was something he could do during the two weeks he had off from work. Then, he noticed a flyer posted by

the psychology department.

NEED MONEY FAST?
Help Psychology Students
With Research
Now Paying \$25 Dollars Per
Day For Participants In A Sleep
Deprivation Experiment
Call 5529 For Information

This sounded like something he might be interested in. He would probably just have to take some silly psychological tests or answer some questions about his sleeping habits. But, what did it mean by "per day"? Maybe they wanted him to keep a journal over a few days. Anyway, he'd call and find out about it. This could be his answer. John wrote down the number and headed out the door. It was getting dark, and he hadn't had dinner. After he ate, he would be sure to call about the ad.

Later that evening, John picked up the phone and dialed the number he had written down. The voice on the other end of the line explained that the experiment was to record how lack of sleep affects an individual. Four other people had already signed up for it. They would require him to stay awake as long as he could and to answer some questions each day. He would also take some simple tests. Because of safety, they would provide any transportation and terminate the test when they felt it was necessary. Also, he could not have any other plans or anything that needed to be done. That was why they were conducting the experiment during Christmas break. John reasoned that it would not be anything he hadn't done before, except now he would be getting paid for it. If he could stay awake for four days, he'd be able to make all of his bills. No problem. John signed himself up. He would begin the experiment on the following Monday.

On the day that the experiment began, John walked into the psychology lab where an older student met him and began recording some personal information. The student led John into a room and asked him to have a seat. Another student came in and handed him a test. It was short, and easy enough for a third grader:

How does sugar taste?
Is ice hot or cold?
Which is lighter, a feather
or an egg?
What color is a stop sign?
What sound does a dog
make?

The student took the completed test and handed John a small notebook. He was supposed to write down what happened each day starting out by recording events, then trying to add some of his thoughts. They told John to stay awake as long as he could, and they would come by to pick him up at least once a day at noon, and maybe a second time at eight in the evening. Caffeine was permitted in the experiment, but nothing else. They gave John \$25 for the first day, and sent him on his way. He drove home and parked his car, thinking that he would not be using it for a few days.

The first day was easy. Even past his normal bedtime John, had no trouble staying awake. For a while he just watched television. With his hectic schedule, this was a luxury he could not usually afford. But now it was benefitting him. He was making some money just by doing this all night. After a while, though, he got bored and started playing with his computer. It was amazing to him how fast time passed. He would get involved in a game of Doom and hours would glide by. At about four in the morning, John fixed himself some nachos. Another movie was just

starting on HBO, so he settled down with the nachos and a large glass of Coke. This kept his attention for a while.

After the movie was over, John got up to stretch. He suddenly felt very tired. Moving around a little and thinking that he just needed some exercise, he put on some sweats and tennis shoes. Stepping out into the cold morning to go for a jog, John felt crisp air awakening his senses. A mile later, he stopped running and walked back to the house. Now, he was awake again.

Once back in the house, John picked up the journal and began to write. There was not much to say and it looked more like an itinerary than a psychological journal. He tried to add some feelings to make it look better.

Day One

10:00 pm Watched "Alive!" Good movie. Wouldn't want to sleep after it anyway.
12:30 am Watched some TV shows
1:45 am Played some computer games.
4:00 am Watched "Forrest Gump." Another good movie.
6:00 am Went for a run.

John fixed himself breakfast, just a bowl of cereal. Then he looked around for something to do. The problem with staying awake wasn't so much that he was sleepy. He was just getting bored. While wandering around the house looking for things to do, John thought he would clean up a little but remembered that he had to do some shopping. He realized that he was out of furniture polish, so he called the phone number that the student in the psychology lab had given him. He asked the girl who answered the phone how he was supposed to get food and

groceries. The sleepy voice told him not to worry, and that they would take him to the store during the noon meeting. John apologized for waking her up, explaining that he did not realize how early it was. After hanging up the phone, he picked up the glass cleaner and began wiping the windows. He hadn't cleaned in a couple of months. This should keep him busy for a while.

After he had finished with the kitchen and was about halfway through with the bathroom, John heard a knock at the door. It startled him because he had gotten used to the silence. When he opened the door, he saw one of the students that he had met the day before. They were ready for the noon meeting. John got into the van with the student and four other volunteers. The meeting was short, just a few questions, and he had to take that test again. It was just as easy as the first day, but it was a little harder to keep his mind focused. Occasionally, he would have to read a question twice. After the meeting, they all went to the store to get what they needed and stopped by a burger place on the way back.

It was three o'clock by the time John was dropped off at his house \$25 richer. The afternoon sun drained his energy. A headache began to develop, so he took a couple of aspirin and sat to rest for a minute. He spent the rest of the day watching television and playing computer games. A couple of times he went outside to get

some fresh air and decided to wash his car, thinking that it would help him stay awake. Late that night, John watched two more movies. Morning came, and he was engrossed in a twelve-page

letter to a friend. After finishing the letter, he made some insignificant notes in the journal and took a long hot shower. John piddled the morning away with some minor activities until the van arrived

for the afternoon meeting.

The meeting was the same as the day before, except that tempers were short. These five people, who barely knew each other, were already annoyed. The tests seemed much harder than the day before. They all went out for lunch, and then dropped John off at 2:30 with another \$25. He was glad to get away from those people.

John tried to watch television, but it was becoming harder to concentrate. He decided to work on the bathroom some more. The radio was blaring as he scrubbed the shower doors. He was thinking about dinner when he thought for a second that he smelled bacon. The odor was so strong that he went into the kitchen to check the stove. Of course, nothing was there. He immediately thought that he must have imagined it. The lack of sleep was finally getting to him. On his way back to the bathroom, John noticed a towel that was lying in the middle of the hallway. He picked it up and threw it into the laundry basket. John went back to the bathroom and finished



cleaning. Satisfied with the job he had done, he thought he would take a break and fix a snack. The idea of bacon had made him hungry.

Halfway down the hallway, John suddenly stopped. A towel was lying in the middle of the floor. Although he was sure that he picked it up, John concluded that it was his imagination. Yet, it unnerved him. He picked up the towel and tossed it into the laundry basket, making sure nothing else was on the floor.

After making some cheese toast, John walked back to the living room and glanced at his freshly cleaned bathroom. What he saw made him drop his food. There was mud all over everything. It was running down the shower doors filling the sink. Footprints were leading into the shower, but no one was there. John stared for a minute, then an idea struck him. Maybe this was part of the experiment. One of the students had set this up to try to confuse him. This idea relaxed him as he stepped into the bathroom to try to find out how the student had gotten in and out. But when he entered, the mud vanished.

John felt light-headed. Moving into the living room and sitting down, John thought, but couldn't figure out what was going on. Apparently, his perception was off. He could think twice before he believed anything else he saw, but thinking that this experience was interesting, he wrote it down in his journal. This would certainly add some color to it.

It was already dark outside, and John was exhausted. This would be his third night awake. He settled down to watch some sitcoms but keeping his mind on them was difficult. When he got up a few minutes later, it occurred to him that something was wrong. He looked around and then noticed the rug. Patches of

light from the window stretched across the designs on the rug underneath his feet. His gaze moved slowly upward, and then he became horrified by what he saw. The sun was shining!

John looked at his watch; it had stopped. He must have fallen asleep. He ran to the bedroom to look at the clock, tripping over a towel in the hallway. The room was dark. He fumbled for the clock on the nightstand and brought it out to the living room. Nine o' clock. Was that am or pm?

He took a deep breath and tried to calm down. He must be imagining things again. Or maybe he fell asleep and didn't realize it. How could he tell? The television. He found the remote and flipped to channel eight, the Preview Channel. There it was, nine pm. He must have imagined the sunshine. It was dark outside, just as it should be. John grabbed the journal and began to write. This would surprise the students. He wondered if they would think he made the whole thing up.

Day Three

9:00 pm I thought it was daytime for a few minutes. It was a very upsetting experience to be so confused. . . .

This was almost too much for John. If something like that happened again, he would give up the experiment and go to sleep. After all, he had already earned \$75. It was not that he was sleepy—he lost that desire about twelve hours ago—it was that reality had become distorted. Continuing in this manner couldn't be healthy for him. But for now, he would keep going.

John worked on a few crossword puzzles in an attempt to focus his mind. After that, he fixed himself something eat,

poured a large glass of Coke, and sat in front of the television. There was a movie on, but he didn't feel like watching it. He was not paying attention when he reached for his drink and he knocked his glass over. He tried to catch it, but it shattered when it hit the floor. Trying to pick up the broken glass, he cut open his hand leaving a huge gash.

John jumped up from the couch and grabbed a towel that was lying in the hall. He wrapped it tightly around his hand and grabbed his keys. He wanted to get to the hospital before he started getting dizzy. It was only two miles down the interstate, and he could be there in less than five minutes.

By the time he reached the exit for the interstate, blood had soaked through the towel. John jerked an old shirt from behind the seat and wrapped it around the bloody towel. Suddenly, something caught his eye. There was something up the road ahead of him. As he got closer, he saw that it was a boat. In the middle of the interstate? His lack of sleep was clouding reality again. He would have moved over to the other lane just to be sure, but construction was blocking it. This didn't matter. He figured if he stared at the boat long enough he would probably start seeing some fish too. John couldn't trust his mind. He drove along as though nothing were there. It was too late when he realized that the boat was attached to a trailer. The truck that was pulling it had hit a deer and flipped on its side. John drove right through what he thought was a hallucination. His mind had tricked him one more time.

Lori McCallister



SECOND PLACE
PHOTOGRAPHY



UNTITLED



8 5/8" x 10"

Jeanette Henry

SECOND PLACE
POETRY



HER NAP TIME

She *kick kick kicks*

her little legs

against the high chair

her big head

lolls on a stick

slap slap slaps

her open hands
on the serving tray

the spittle of applesauce
in a smile

a blushing swoon
suddenly knowing
gravity

a little time
the crusting over
of the morning meal

a quiet fluttering
of the lids

a final gasp

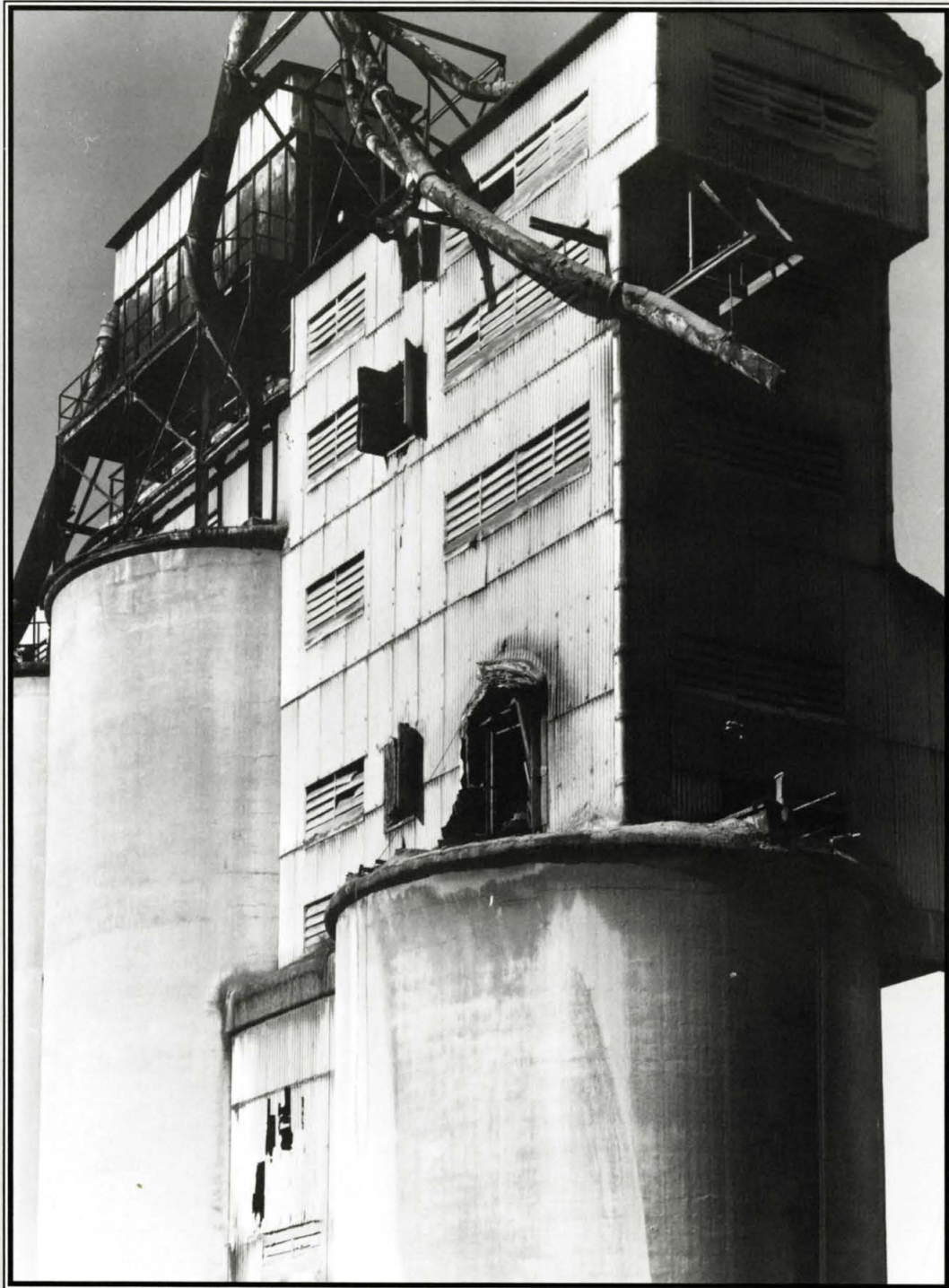
and she
is
out.

Eric R. Fish

FIRST PLACE
PHOTOGRAPHY



UNTITLED



16 9/16" x 12 1/4"

Michael Roller

FIRST PLACE
NON-FICTION



MY LAST WAR

The Arms Race Begins:

It all started with "Blue Angel." I was thirteen years old, scrawny, but tall for my age. I had brown hair that was cut in a mop-top style, and I was devoted to my older brother, Sean. Sean was seventeen with short brown hair and an average build. He had recently signed six years of his life away by joining the Navy. It would be his last summer before taking on the full responsibilities of an adult.

My best friend, Brad Gaarder, and I were at his house pondering what to do for the day. Brad was twelve years old and diminutive for his age. His brain and courage were equally small, but he was still my best friend. We were sitting at the kitchen table when we heard the clapping sound of the flap on the mailbox. Brad went to get the mail and when he came back, he presented me with a magazine. The "Blue Angel" fireworks catalog.

Excitedly, I asked, "Brad, let me borrow this to show my brother!"

Brad replied, "Okay." And I was off to the races.

It was only two short blocks to my house but it seemed more like two miles as I ran home. I was in a rabid state as I exploded through the front door. I had to find my brother and let him in on this new TOP SECRET

supply data. I found Sean in his room playing Atari.

"Sean, you've got to see this fireworks catalog. Everything is half the price we would have to pay at Fireworks Barn."

His initial reaction was a "hurumph" of skepticism. Then he said, "Yeah, sure, whatever."

As usual, he was unwilling to believe his lame little brother could ever be right about anything. He continued playing his game as I stood waiting. I started to tell him again that he had to see this catalog, but I was cut short as the game ended. I could tell by his look that he considered me to be the cause of his demise.

"Thanks a lot. I was about to break a new record. If you ever do that to me again I'll pound you." Normally, I would have flinched as he moved toward me, but I just reached forward with the catalog still anticipating his reaction when he looked at it. Within seconds after he began to page through the catalog, I knew I had for once found the promised land.

The two of us lay side by side on our bellies like jackals drooling over a Thanksgiving turkey. Before our eyes an outrageous list of weapons began to emerge on the yellow pad of paper that lay next to my brother. M-Sixties (the most powerful legal firecracker available), Laser Guns (a cylinder containing a ten-shot fusillade of bottle rockets), Jumping Jacks (these looked like firecrackers but instead of exploding they would spin wildly emitting multicolored flames), Starballs (a spherical object that releases sparks and spins in a gyrating fashion for about fifteen seconds), and Saturn Missile Batteries (a box filled with either twenty-five or 100 plastic rocket engines that produce a shrieking sound when fired) were all on the list. We continued for what

seemed only two minutes but must have been two hours of adding, deleting, and refining until we were at an acceptable amount.

Sean and I were putting the finishing touches on our order when Matt Nathan arrived. Matt was my brother's best friend. He was over six feet tall, and was a major goof-off. He had a short cropped military style haircut and a semi-insane look about his eyes. Sean and Matt were the generals that would lead our small army into battle.

Matt entered the room and the first thing he said was, "You said Cleaver acquired this new supply data. How can we trust its reliability?"

Sean smiled at Matt's half-mocking attempt to belittle me. Then he said, "This is the real deal, Nathan. Cleavie really came through."

Matt took the catalog and glared at me skeptically, but his skepticism evaporated within moments. He imitated my brother's initial reaction and then sat down to begin his list. He pulled together a short list of arms to be tacked onto ours.

The next step was convincing our mother to order the fireworks. Right away Mom was suspicious and said, "\$793.00!" Why do you need eight-hundred dollars' worth of fireworks?" She ended this tirade with a resounding, "No!"

Fortunately for us, Mom was the only opposition. Our father had recently started a new job in Oklahoma and only came home one weekend a month. If he had been home there was no way he would have budged. With our mother, it was simply a matter of time before the combined effect of my brother's imminent departure and the fact that we were paying for the entire bill ourselves caused



her to give in.

Getting Mom to make the buy for us was comparable to a third-world country asking the United States for advanced weapons technology. Everyone agrees that it's a bad idea for an immature and irresponsible nation to have access to advanced weaponry, but with some cajoling, our country passes out technology, naively expecting there are no bad intentions. Like the United States, Mom was unaware of the full extent of our plans for the weapons she was purchasing.

Mom placed our order and the suspenseful wait began. Meanwhile, I started to make the necessary preparations to outfit our troop in an orderly military manner. First, I went to the army surplus and acquired six ammunition boxes. Next, I purchased a slingshot to use as a long range M-Sixty launcher. Lastly, I created a rocket launcher out of a quarter-inch thick cardboard tube, some black electrical tape, and a plastic cover from a chicken pot pie. In the last week of June, the goods arrived.

I

The Enemy Unknown: It was on the second day of July that history would be changed forever, when the forces of the heavens and the stars there within would cause a movement toward a war that would shape the planet forever. Okay, okay so it wasn't quite that big of an occurrence, but it did happen on the second. That night at approximately 22:00 hours, Brad and I took a Starball out into the middle of the T junction of 5th Avenue and 8th Street. I lit the fuse when I was certain that no cars were coming. As I started to run back up the hill to my house, I saw a trickling trace of light coming from around the bend. "Oh,

Shit!" was my initial reaction as the Starball spouted its fire only moments before the car reached it. I heard brakes screeching and turned, fully expecting an adult to get out of the car to berate my childish ignorance. Instead, the car continued down 5th Avenue and made a left on 7th Street.

Brad and I went into the house thinking we had lucked out. But only moments after entering my bedroom, the house was under bombardment. Immediately, I ran to alert my brother of the siege but found that he and Matt were already heading out the door. Sean told me as he exited, "Call Whick." Following his orders, I called Cooper Whick. Cooper was one of Matt's friends. He had long wavy blond hair and innocent doe-like eyes. Despite Cooper's innocent appearance, he loved heavy metal and wore a black leather jacket.

I returned to my room to find Brad quietly observing the ongoing warfare. Our unidentified adversaries had situated themselves across from our motor home on the eastern corner of 8th Street. From our elevated position, we could see them cowering behind our neighbor's bushes. I decided it would be a good idea to fire my Rocket Launcher from the protective cover of my bedroom. After releasing only one rocket, I realized that I had made a big mistake. The smoke from the launching quickly fogged up the room and forced me to reevaluate my strategy.

After abandoning my poorly chosen position, Brad and I ran down the hallway toward the front door. As we reached the door, my mom asked, "Michael, what's that odor? You're not lighting fireworks in the house are you?"

"Of course not, Mom. Well, not really. I was hanging out

the window and the smoke was just sort of released into my room. Sorry."

With that simple explanation and apology, I left before any more questions were asked. Brad and I crawled to cover behind the bushes above the motor home pad. To my surprise Matt was there with our arriving reinforcement, Cooper.

"How's it going?" I asked Matt.

"We're running low on ammo. Sean's holding them off while Coop and I head in to resupply."

With that brief answer, Cooper and Matt crawled with me toward our house. I sent Brad down to aid my brother while I headed for the west side of 8th Street. As I crossed 5th Avenue, the enemy rained down a vicious volley of fire. I dove behind a large tree just as they gained a lead on me. I was in a perfect position to press the enemy. Sean continued to fire across 5th Avenue as I launched rockets across 8th Street. The enemy had been flanked and trapped in cross-fire.

About this time, our mother realized what was happening and came outside. She said, "The fuel tank under the motor home might explode!" or something to that effect.

Under normal circumstances, we would have listened to our mother, but we were under attack and didn't even know the perpetrators. We couldn't just yell out to an anonymous enemy force, "Hey, whoever you are, we have to quit!" That would have likely been met with a death dealing blow, and it sounds kind of wimpy. So, with no other option available, we continued the fight.

Mom went back inside and stood watching from the picture window as the combat carried on.

SECOND PLACE
DRAWING



WRAPPED BIRD I



29 7/8" x 22"

Tiffany Stewart

One of our opponents saw her and fired a rocket directly at the window. With this insult, we redoubled our efforts and scored a few minor Bottle Rocket near hits and Jumping Jack scorches.

Five minutes after the rocket attack on Mom, she came back outside and yelled, "I just called the police!" Our unprincipled enemy made a fatal mistake as he replied with a reverberating "Fuck you!"

When it came to our mother, Sean was a virtual pit bull. That is not to say I wasn't, but Sean became blood thirsty. He stole up to the house and retrieved a 100-cnt Saturn Missile Battery. He scrambled through the forest (directly behind our house) and exited at the end of the block, so he could escape detection as he crossed over 5th Avenue. We kept the enemy pinned down as Sean snuck up within ten feet of their rear guard. He lit the Saturn Battery and charged.

The opposing force collapsed as they found themselves faced by a volleying of fire that had never before been seen in warfare. They ran for their lives in a group retreat to their car. My brother was on their tails the entire way, firing and hitting them at least five times. As they reached the car and jumped in, Sean sank a missile through the door and two more through the open windows. He continued bombarding the car as they drove away.

II

The Return of a Nemesis: As the next day arrived, we wondered who our adversaries had been. Who would have the audacity to attack us on our home front, and then besmirch our mother in the midst of the conflict? We found out soon enough.

At 12:00 hours, we received a call from the anonymous battlers. They wanted to have a showdown on top of Pioneer Hill at 22:00 hours. Initially, we were tentative in accepting, until they decided to reveal their identities. It was the Ulmers, our nemesis from across town.

The Ulmer clan was led by brothers Shawn and Chris. They were both skinny and had blond hair. Shawn had a geekish appearance due to his glasses and a bowl haircut. Chris wasn't as bad, but his attempt at a California surfdude cut didn't quite fit. The rest of their force was fleshed out with their closest friends and allies.

We had fought the Ulmer brothers last summer. The confrontation ended in a draw but we won on a technicality: they had to go in for dinner at six o' clock. After last night's thrashing, they were looking for revenge and we were prepared to show them for a third time who was the best in town.

III

The Multiplying Enemy Army: Around 14:00 hours Brad, Sean, and I put the finishing touches on a skirmish against the consummate redneck, Rodney Archambaughe. Rodney was a pudgy guy who believed that the World Wide Wrestling Federation was real. His three-man force deserted, and, as far as we knew, he had gone home for the day.

Later, as we made our preparations for the Ulmer conflict, our house was hit. Rodney had forged a treaty that allowed three formally opposing factions to join in an effort against our home. We had not incited the conflict with this coalition in any way. In fact, we were not even outside. They just attacked. My

brother ran outside and charged up the hill with a 25-cnt Saturn Battery. As he released the rockets, all but one of the numerous enemies had retreated out of harm's way. When Sean's battery ended its fire, he arrogantly challenged the retreating force to a battle to be fought at the same time and place as our previous engagement. No longer would it be a six-on-six fight. Now the odds were stacked overwhelmingly in favor of the Ulmers.

IV

The Last Steps: We loaded our ammunition boxes with bottle rockets, firecrackers, and other various weapons. Next, we filled Dad's bait box with the last hope of victory. We dubbed the bait box "Death Blassem" (from the movie, "The Last Starfighter," for the name of the multiple laser firing weapon, that allowed a single ship to defeat an entire armada). We loaded the box with our last 100-cnt Saturn, six 25-cnt Saturn, four Laser Guns, eight Roman Candles and twenty packages of Jumping Jacks. Death Blassem was loaded to the gills. It had to be.

Our company began assembling at 18:30 hours. Matt and Cooper arrived first, showing great disdain for the enemies' cowardly assault on our house. Matt asked, "Did they really attack for no reason? You weren't even outside?" Sean nodded and Cooper just shook his head in disbelief. Matt's eyes grew wild as he said, "Blood will flow freely tonight. They'll all sleep in shallow graves before the day is through." Matt came back to reality when we all started laughing at his exaggeration.

Brad showed up late and obviously not so willingly. Then our last reserve, Dwayne, arrived. Dwayne was a redhead and his

face was dappled with orange freckles. He stood an even six feet tall and had a thick build.

After donning our camouflage gear, we departed via the back door and began our journey to the battle ground. We entered the forest that ended at my backyard and followed a worn trail for a quarter mile before exiting onto the sand hill (a three-acre area of rolling sand dunes). Through the desert of our discontent, we traveled and reached our next turning point, Dirt Rock Hill. A ten-foot-high dirt dune that marked the beginning of a twenty-square-acre area of wild wheat-blanketed land. It followed through three or four rolling valleys before the final vale led to the top of Pioneer Hill.

V

The Assembled Foe: Upon arrival we realized we had made a mistake: the enemy force was larger than we had imagined. There were at least thirty troopers, a full platoon. We barely scraped a six-man squad (five and a half, Brad hardly counted).

Our initial sighting of the enemy went unnoticed. We had crawled up the side of the steepest part of Pioneer Hill. Sean and I observed the enemy with our mini-binoculars, counting the most dangerous commanders and their forces. Among the enemy elite were Jodie Bender, Matt Kevien, and the evil Mike Whimmer.

Jodie was a twisted individual. He had curly blond hair and his appearance was perpetually dirty. Kevien was a low life, but in general, he was an honorable adversary. He had mid-length black hair and a nose like a hawk's beak. Whimmer was slightly overweight and was a bully. He lived to do bad things,

but seemed to have some amount of charisma because of his size.

Various mercenaries who had been bought off with the promise of Brickell blood filled out the rest of the enemy ranks. It was the Brickell brothers and friends versus every other guy who had fireworks in town.

VI

The Battle Joined: The battle commenced when I launched a rocket into the midst of the enemy force while Dwayne simultaneously released several M-Sixties. Initially our unannounced attack left the enemy confused, but they regrouped and began a hesitant advance in our direction.

The battle escalated quickly when Sean and Matt, psychotically, decided to delve into the enemies' middle. Our generals breached the hill and charged in carrying two ammo boxes and Death Blassem. It was quite a sight to behold as Sean and Matt stood back to back fending off their attackers. They were like a pair of warriors facing impending death from all sides. As the enemy swarmed around them, Sean and Matt staved the enemy assault as well as could be expected, but they were still on the verge of being overrun. The only respite came from the low caliber and scarcity of enemy supplies.

The top of Pioneer Hill was a circular shaped plateau, a little smaller than the dimensions of a football field. Although the enemy was attacking Sean and

Matt from the sides and the front, they couldn't get behind them to make a concerted rear attack. For this reason, Jodie Bender and a five-man team began a flanking maneuver along the back side of the hill where the rest of our squad was concealed. As Jodie spotted our troop, he called for a charge at our position. Somehow, he foolishly imagined he could close the thirty-five yards to us—on an incline—before we could obliterate his force. Dwayne began to rain down M-Sixties, and with one Screaming Tiger launch, the opposition went running for home.

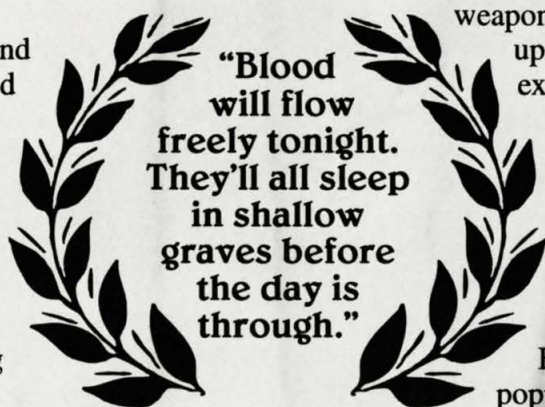
Within the first few minutes of the engagement, Sean and Matt had given up all hope of fighting a small terms battle. They bided their time for the enemy to fall within range of the Death Blassem. As the enemy pushed forward, a lucky and damaging blow was landed. A bottle rocket hit Matt and ricocheted into an ammo box packed with about five hundred bottle rockets. Instantly, the ammunition began to discharge. Matt could only watch in

despair as one of the weapon dumps went up in a smoking explosive ball.

Amidst this tragic loss came a cloud of smoke that allowed a surprise dash to Death

Blassem. Sean popped the lid, pulled out two

Saturn Batteries and threw them to Matt. Matt caught the batteries and began to light his first one while Sean reached for the 100-cnt battery. Sean felt the imminent closeness of the enemy, and he lit the big gun. With the batteries' ignition, the cloud of smoke faded

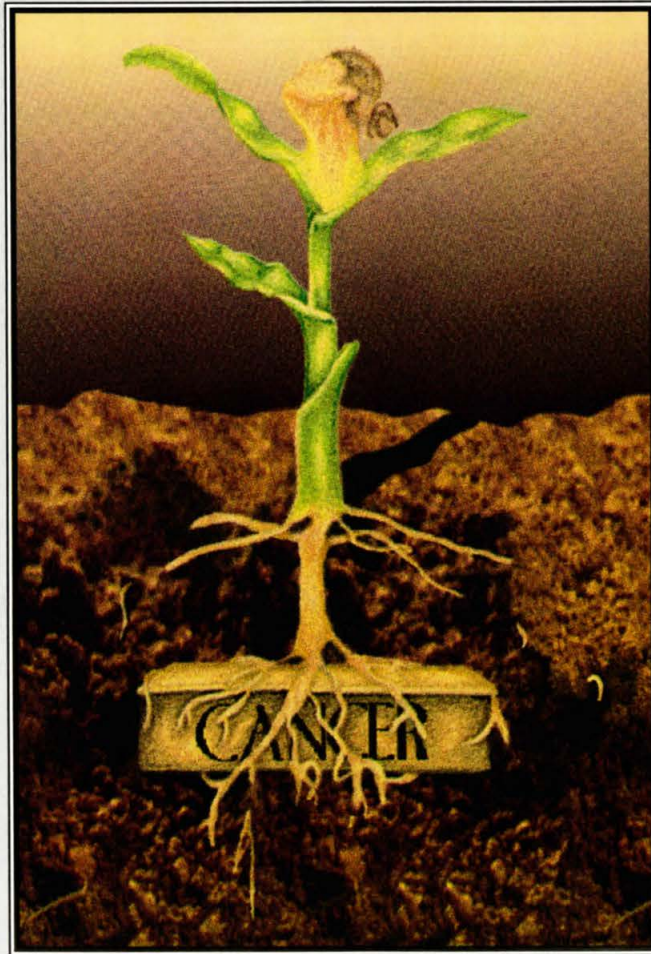


**"Blood
will flow
freely tonight.
They'll all sleep
in shallow
graves before
the day is
through."**

HONORABLE MENTION
COMPUTER ART



LIFE OR DEATH



13 1/4" x 9 3/8"

Shanda Hayes

and the enemy appeared, lined up, as if waiting to be mowed down. The resulting dodging and fleeing of the enemy personnel left no doubt that they were in fear of being decimated by a savage whistler hit. The sound alone put fear in their hearts, and they knew they had come as close to over-running our force as they would

see that day.

Over the next ten minutes, Sean and Matt discharged the entire Death Blassem, except for two 25-cnt Batteries. With the near exhaustion of Death Blassem, Sean tossed one Saturn Battery to Matt and ordered a retreat to our position. Matt took off with the ammunition boxes as

Sean covered the rear.

When Matt reached our position, he called my number for a direct rocket launch (no arc to the shot) into the enemy ranks — giving Sean cover for his escape. My last Screaming Tiger did the trick. The entire enemy unit dove for cover as the rocket screamed by my brother's right side. Sean

lunged over the hillside, just reaching us, as the enemy began saturating our position with bottle rockets.

VII

The Full Retreat: Sean had survived, but we were still in a bad position. It was near dusk and we were retreating toward the setting sun. Withdrawal was in order because, although we had dispersed at least eight enemies, we still had over twenty men to face. Also, we had depleted half our weapons supply.

Sean and Matt decided it would be best if we divided our force. Matt, Sean, and Brad would be the number one team and Cooper, Dwayne, and I would be number two. Number two would fall back while number one followed with a fighting withdrawal. Then team two would turn and hold its position while giving long range cover fire to team one.

As my detachment retreated to Dirt Rock Hill, the closing of the day was complete. We prepared to give our protective cover fire for team one, but it proved unnecessary. Sean and Brad reached the hill right behind my team. The enemy was nowhere to be seen and neither was Matt. Sean explained that Matt had stayed behind to perform a covert operation with the last Saturn Battery.

Matt dug himself into one of only two overgrown areas in the fielded valleys. As the remaining enemy troop invaded the second valley cautiously, Matt watched them pass one by one. When they reached the bottom of the vale, they paused as the various head honchos discussed the next move. They were in close quarters, believing they were secure from enemy attack.

A small spark illuminated

the night as Matt put flame to fuse. Bodies collided in the darkness as the radiating form of twenty-five whistling rockets chased the fleeing faces. Matt charged through the heart of their force. He claimed a six-man score ratio, including a hit on the infamous Mike Whimmer. The enemy tried to regroup in time to retaliate but Matt had already achieved the hilltop.

We heard the report of this last Saturn Missile Battery, and minutes later Matt appeared giving a friendly war cry. We briefly celebrated his return, and with the news of his damaging guerrilla attack, our morale was soaring. Then Matt related where the enemy force had stopped and that they had not pursued him. They were in a valley, one hundred and fifty yards away.

I pulled out the last 21-Gun Salute (a rocket that releases twenty-one firecrackers as its payload) and grimly loaded the launcher. Then I turned to Matt and asked him more precisely what the enemy position was. I set up an arc and requested the lighting. Then I quickly closed the spark flap and made a final adjustment. My release was excellent, and we watched the rocket soar on a flawless incline. As the rocket reached its high point, and began to descend, we knew this was the most perfect launch ever to be graced upon a human soul.

The rocket fell, still not releasing its payload as it disappeared. A moment after this last sighting—directly above the enemy—we heard the report echoing over the battlefield. Later, Chris Ulmer told us that it had been the most perfect shot known to man. As the disbelieving enemy watched the streaking flame headed in their direction, their jaws must have dropped. With that deadly volley, the Ulmers' com-

rades departed, leaving them alone to continue the fight.

The battle raged a little longer between the Ulmer and Brickell clans, but eventually it became a truce. Neither side wanted to continue the two-hour battle, and both of our ammo dumps had been depleted substantially. Although it was disappointing to end in a stalemate, everyone agreed that enough "blood" had been shed for the night. We went our separate ways as if none of the earlier enmity had ever existed.

Eventually, everyone in the squadron left home for the real world. My brother's stint in the Navy went well, and before he ended his service, he was offered a job on the White House communications detail. He went on to work for a prosperous communications company gaining commendation for his diligent work. Cooper joined the Air Force and became a plane mechanic. Brad joined the Marines, but after only one month in boot camp, they discharged him for a lack of moral fortitude (he just couldn't hack it). Dwayne enlisted in the Army but served only one year before he was discharged for an alcohol problem. Matt entered the Navy with the prospect of becoming a Navy Seal. He didn't make it because he had flat feet. He went on to become a rescue diver aboard an aircraft carrier. The last time I saw Matt he was crazier than ever, and he was missing his left front tooth.

I never fought again. Maybe with that last war, I closed the chapter of childhood and began the long and painful route to maturity. I imagine this to have been my last moment of childish freedom. A time when the realities of life had not fully set in.

M.R. Brickell

HONORABLE MENTION
POETRY

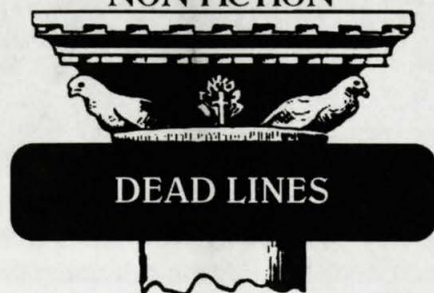


PHILADELPHIA

I have my own memories of Philadelphia,
The historic landmarks, the cobbled streets,
The old toy shops and hotels...
Yes, the hotels we stayed in
That were at least modern enough to have indoor plumbing,
Even if the water came only in the flavor cold,
And existed only in a room at the end of the hall.
But what I remember more
Was the building full of those children like my brother,
Who were wounded by being born,
Sick by no reason under God
Except for the one my mom discovered:
My brother was a trial from the Heavens
To test her faith.
But that's not Philadelphia.
Philadelphia was the Institute
Full of workers who really cared
About those children born wounded, and
Who gave us toboggans with their initials. IAHP.
Philadelphia was the theater where I first saw Star Wars.
Philadelphia was the little girl in the floor
Who was blind and unable to control her body
Who would only quit crying when my mom
Sang to her. My mother, the cursed by God,
Sang to this girl,
"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine,"
And she was quiet
Because she wanted to hear this song that was hers.
That's one of the best things my mother's ever done.
Philadelphia was a place of boredom for a kid my age
Who had nobody around to be with
That was my age and ability.
But Philadelphia was necessary for my brother,
And it was magic for me,
Just a lonely sort of magic sometimes,
Spending a lot of time in a large room
Full of the fallen angels that couldn't do for themselves
Any of the things that they should.
Philadelphia was a place of fear and loneliness
And wonder and beauty and softness and noise.
Philadelphia was one of the gems
That made up my life.

Bill Abbott

SECOND PLACE NON-FICTION



It is precisely at their worst that human beings are most interesting.

—H.L. Mencken

The first body was a 60-year-old man who'd been shot in the back of the neck with a .22-caliber handgun and dumped in a water-filled ditch along a remote road in Knox County. It was the first corpse I'd ever seen, so it is difficult to forget. It was early morning on March 30, 1989, not long after I joined the *Knoxville Journal* newspaper as senior police reporter. I remember it rained incessantly that morning. I stood in the rain for what seemed like hours, waiting for the Knox County medical examiner to arrive and pronounce the man dead (as if there were any doubt); sheriff's detectives would not make a press statement until the victim had been officially pronounced dead. I remember feeling morbidly curious, fascinated by the corpse, but somehow frightened, too. I edged as close as I could to the body before someone draped a tarpaulin over it, cutting short my scrutiny. I remember thinking, "Well, you've finally seen a dead body, and it's not so bad now, is it?" The body, sprawled face-down in the ditch, had a small red wound on the back of the neck. The skin was wrinkled in places from the con-

stant downpour, and had this odd grayish-green tinge. I don't remember much else about that murder, not the victim's name, not if anyone was charged in his death, nothing — except that wrinkled, gray-green skin and waiting anxiously for the M.E. to arrive, because I had a 10:30 a.m. story deadline. It was the first of dozens of murders I would cover at the *Knoxville Journal*, the first of many corpses I would see. The M.E. finally arrived and I got my story done well before deadline.

Before I quit the *Journal* in May of 1990, I lost track of the murders, lost count of the bodies. There were so many. But it wasn't as if I'd never encountered the dark side of human nature or the criminal mind before. Before joining the *Journal*, I'd worked four-plus years as a reporter at the *Bristol-Herald-Courier* newspaper in Bristol, Virginia, covering crime and courts in the entire Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia region. I reported on numerous murders, rapes, kidnappings, and other violent crimes, as well as most of the subsequent court proceedings. I confronted the baseness and brutality of man, on one hand; on the other, a cold, uncaring legal system that seemed to favor criminals and ignore victims. Sometimes, despite my best efforts to remain unbiased and objective, even then, before the bodies, the crime or court testimony got to me.

There was, for example, the brutal murder of little Scotty Trexler, a toddler who was systematically beaten and tortured — scalded with boiling water, burned with lighted cigarettes, and worse. During the trial of Scotty's teenage mother, Tammy, and her live-in boyfriend, Kerry Bowers, the testimony at times had judge, jury and even members of the media crying — especially the

day a pathologist graphically described, how with a small wooden mannikin, little Scotty's legs had been pulled apart like the wishbone on a turkey, until the tendons popped and the joints separated. I cried myself to sleep that night. Later, a TV reporter told me my front-page Sunday story on that testimony was the most graphic he had ever read in a newspaper. It wasn't meant as a compliment, but I took it as one. "Good!" I replied, and meant it. Because I wanted to shock my readers, to outrage them as I was outraged, to make them feel Scotty's pain — all in hopes that it would prompt them to report any suspected child abuse, because too many people had suspected Scotty was being abused, but not one said a word. And so one day Bowers shook Scotty so hard the toddler's brain concussed and Scotty died.

Then there was the girl who spent her fourteenth birthday testifying that her big sister (only sixteen herself) had held her hand the first time her father — a bona fide sociopath and pedophile — raped her. It was one of the sickiest court trials I ever covered. The father, who looked like a snake and was just plain mean, somehow got custody of his two daughters when he was released from prison; he'd pulled eight years of a 20-year sentence for the second-degree murder of an infant. The girls' mother, who ran a massage parlor, evidently didn't want to be bothered with her daughters, so she gave them to her ex-husband when he was paroled. The elder sister, starved for affection she never got, mistook her father's sexual advances for love; she slept with him nightly, pretending she was her daddy's wife. Days, she went to school. Later, the father took the elder daughter to truck stops and prostituted her

SECOND PLACE
DRAWING



ATTACHMENTS



Karen Phelps

for \$25. Eventually, the younger sister told someone she'd been raped. The father was charged with more than 200 crimes — mostly rape and incest — tried, convicted, and sentenced to a couple of centuries in prison. That was all pretty much reported by the media, but it was not the end of the story. The elder daughter learned she was pregnant with her father's child. The baby was a hermaphrodite. The young mother was placed in a foster home, where she was raped by her foster father. Welcome to the criminal justice system.

Obviously, I saw a lot of what is worst about human beings at the *Herald-Courier*, crimes of

passion, crimes of hate, senseless killings, abuses of power, tragedies and freak accidents. But I never saw one corpse. Reporters love to tell war stories; seeing corpses was one of them, a sort of trial by fire. After five years in Bristol, I wanted to see a corpse, as badly as I wanted to go to Knoxville and prove to myself that I had what it took to make it at a metropolitan newspaper. Seeing a body became a sort of longed-for rite of passage; I wondered how I would react. It wasn't very long at all after I joined the *Journal* that I found myself standing on a remote Knox County road, studying the old man's corpse as if I could divine

the meaning of life in the twist of its limbs, the color of its skin, the bloody bullet wound on the back of the neck.

The Journal, now defunct, was an afternoon newspaper; consequently the morning reporters (including yours truly) went in at 5 a.m. We faced an initial 7 a.m. copy deadline and then a 10:30 a.m. deadline for follow-up stories. One had to write and write very fast — there was no time for anything else. I frequently wrote front-page stories in as little as 15 or 20 minutes, with editors literally standing behind my chair screaming at me. It was a hectic, crazy, rush-rush-rush, madhouse, pressure-cooker of a way to make

a living — made all the more so because the *Journal* was more sensationalistic than the competition, the conservative paper-of-record, the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. And, damn it, I loved it, in a perverse sort of way. I had always had a sort of a love-hate relationship with my journalist's job. I loved meeting people, watching trial strategies unfold like a masterful chess game, being "in the know," having my byline on the front page, above the fold, and breaking — or being the first to report — news. But I loathed the pressure, the fear of making errors, getting cursed, the irregular hours, the low pay, writing "fluff" stories. In Bristol and Knoxville (and later in Kingsport). In Knoxville, everything was just more . . . intense than it had been in Bristol.

Oddly enough, the deadlines weren't the worst part in Knoxville. I seemed to do my very best work under intense deadline pressure. But there were other parts of the job there that got old quickly. If I wasn't cranking out a story, I was always either at a crime scene, at the city or county jail, or at the police or sheriff's department. . . . I chased ambulances for a living, as some folks say. I ate, breathed, and slept crime — I lived it. After a while, the job took its toll; my friends said I was depressed, depressing. Like the cops I covered and respected, I was overworked, underpaid, stressed to the max, and used way too much nicotine and alcohol. Cops burn out as frequently as reporters do; both jobs have a way of chewing up people's lives. It takes a very special kind of person to be a good cop or a good police reporter. I used to think I was pretty damn good, but now, looking back, I wonder.

I

I'm sitting in the detective's office of the Knox County Sheriff's Department, sometime before dawn, shooting the breeze with Chief Detective Herman Johnson. I've only been on the job a few weeks, so I'm trying to develop a rapport with Johnson. No one else is in the office. Both a base scanner in the office and a portable scanner clipped to my belt emit intermittent squawks of police traffic and bursts of static. Johnson is a veteran cop with thinning silver-gray hair, a ruddy face and a bulbous nose networked with broken capillaries — most likely, I assume, from some lengthy battle with the bottle. Suddenly the scanner goes crazy: a dispatcher reports a body has been found along a road in rural, east Knox County. I prick up at the call, but Johnson hardly bats an eye. "Aren't you going to check that out?" I ask. Johnson slowly shakes his head, says, "No. It's probably just some drunk."

I find Johnson's studied nonchalance disturbing. I don't know the Knoxville area well enough yet to have much hope of finding my way to the body, no matter how many maps I carry in the *Journal's* staff car. The trick, I've learned, is to get as close to crime scene as possible or, if all else fails, follow a police cruiser, fire truck to the murder, fire, or accident. I'd been hoping that Johnson would head out and I could follow him to the body. Johnson sticks out his lower lip, as if musing, shuffles through a stack of incident reports from the night before. "You're really not going?" I ask, incredulous. "No," Johnson drawls. "Can't run on every reported body. It's probably just some drunk passed out by the roadside. Happens all the time." The scanner chatter has ceased, so

most likely detectives have switched channels to keep the media and others from listening. "Well," I confess, "I guess I better go check it out." Johnson nods, studies the reports. "Talk to ya' later," I say, and head for the staff car.

In the car, I unfold a huge map of Knoxville and try to find a route to the area where the body was found — all I can think to do is head out Strawberry Plains Pike and hope I get close. Confounded by the map, puzzled by Johnson's behavior, on a hunch I pull out of the parking garage, drive around the City-County building and park with the motor running near the exit from the sheriff's department parking garage. A few minutes later Johnson comes speeding out of the garage in his unmarked cruiser, reaches out the window and places a portable bubble-gum machine on the roof of the cruiser. I throw the staff car into drive and follow Johnson, flying. I stay as close on his tail as I can, running a stop sign or two when Johnson turns on his lights and siren. We're several miles out Strawberry Plains Pike — I have no idea where, really — when Johnson finally looks in his rearview mirror and notices me. I cringe, expecting him to pull over to the side of the road, get out and ream my butt royally for following a police car so closely. It's illegal, you know. But he doesn't. Instead, Johnson rolls down the driver's window, sticks his arm out and motions for me to follow. As if I wasn't going to, anyway.

A few miles and what seems like several hundred lefts and rights later, Johnson whips the cruiser to the side of the road. Some other deputies are pulling up in marked cars. I get out, expecting Johnson to make mincemeat out of me, but he says nothing. I shrug. The narrow

nothing. I shrug. The narrow asphalt road is bordered by foot-high brown grass and, several feet from the edge, a barbed-wire fence. Johnson and I start walking up the road, yakking about something. The next thing I know I look up and see a bloody hunk of something snarled in the rusty fence wires, and arm hanging low, a great

brown splotch of dried blood on the weeds below. The body: just a glimpse; just a glance. "Son!" Johnson barks, pointing back the way we came, "You don't need to . . ." Stunned, uncertain quite what I just saw, still processing the image, I throw up my hands, say, "Not another word," and execute a prompt about-face. I walk away, then turn back. A deputy has draped a bright blue tarpaulin over the body in the fence, making a tent shape.

Somewhat shaky, I pull my portable radio and call the news desk, telling my editors, yeah, there is a body and, yeah, I'm pretty damn sure it's a homicide and, no, I don't have any details or i.d.'s, but it looks bad. Cops swarm around the tarpaulin and the M.E.'s not there and, yeah, I'll keep them posted. Once again, the wait is on.

Her name was Jamie Darlene Hickman. No one deserves to die the way she did. It was a horrible, pain-filled, excruciating, prolonged death. Hers is one body I wish I'd never seen.

(See article, "Body of woman is found on east Knox roadside".)

Not a bad story, to be

written on deadline. The fewer the details, the harder the story, though. My follow-up story the next day has more details, none pleasant.

Body of woman is found on east Knox roadside

BY VINCE SINGLETON
OF THE JOURNAL STAFF

The bloody, partially clad body of a young woman was found this morning dumped on the roadside in east Knox County, apparently dead from multiple stab wounds, authorities said.

The unidentified body was found lying on its back against a barbed wire fence on Frazier Lane, a few hundred feet off Kodak Road, shortly after 7 a.m. by a school bus driver.

The woman, who was apparently killed sometime overnight, was between 20 years and 30 years old, said Knox County Sheriff's Department spokesman Art Miller.

"We've got an unidentified white female," Miller said about 9:30 a.m. after the body was transported to University Hospital for an autopsy. "She died from multiple stab wounds, according to (Knox County medical examiner) Dr. Pedigo. The time of death was sometime overnight. It does appear that the body was perhaps dumped here."

Miller would not say whether the woman's throat had been cut, only that she had several stab wounds to the torso.

Knox County school bus driver Isaac Hensley said he spotted the body lying against a fencepost under some trees about 7:20 a.m. as he was taking five children to school.

"I pulled on out the road here because I didn't want the kids to see it," said a shaken Hensley, 49. "It tore me all to pieces."

Hensley said he might not have noticed the body had not a boy on the bus got up to look out the window as they passed it.

"I think they all saw it," said Hensley, whose been driving school buses for two years. "It looked like she'd been there a few hours. . . . I don't know if I'll ever be able to drive a bus again."

Homicide investigators marked off several spots of blood on the pavement near the body and made photographs of tire tracks while waiting for the coroner to arrive.

One officer said the woman, clad only in shorts, had tufts of grass clutched in one hand. Blood had flowed into the grass and formed a pool.

Miller said investigators will examine recent missing persons reports as their investigation continues.

expressed my sincerest condolences over her loss, and asked Mrs. Hickman if she had any idea why anyone would do that to her daughter. Mrs. Hickman cried, "I can't talk right now!" and asked for my phone number, promising me she'd call back. Of course, I thought when she hung up, she wouldn't. Oh, well, I consoled myself, and went to tell my editors how close I'd come to a really good story.

Fifteen minutes later, much to my surprise, Mrs. Hickman called back. It was after the 10:30 a.m. deadline when I finally hung up. I yelled to the city editor that I had some damn good copy, should I hold it till tomorrow? I gave my editor the gist of my interview; he said, "Write it! Now!" and ran to stop the proverbial presses. I cranked out the story in fifteen minutes or so.

(See article, "Slain prostitute killed by drugs, her mother says.")

Pretty damn good lead on that story, if I may say so myself, though I might reverse the order now, like this: "Slain Knoxville prostitute Jamie Darlene Hickman was a weak child who was overcome and killed by drugs, her adoptive mother tearfully said this morning." It's a good story, too, considering I cranked it out on deadline.

II

Three things about the Hickman murder intrigue me still. First, who killed her? To my knowledge, no one has ever been charged in Jamie's death. Second, whatever possessed her

Woman found slain on road was prostitute, officials say

Victim had been arrested four times in past two years

BY VINCE SINGLETON

Of The Journal staff

APR 18 1989

Knox County authorities have released the identity of a Knoxville prostitute who was found brutally beaten and stabbed Monday along a rural east Knox County road.

The victim was Jamie Hickman, 26, said Knox County sheriff's chief detective John O. Maples. Her identity was released after her parents, who live in Seymour in Sevier County, were notified, Maples said.

Hickman, who was identified by Knoxville Police Department fingerprint records, had been arrested for prostitution four times in the past two years, said KCSD spokesman Art Miller.

An autopsy was to be held this morning, and investigators say results should help determine the exact cause of death.

"We won't know until after the autopsy whether it was the beating, the stab wounds or the slashes," he said.

Hickman, clad in shirt and skirt but minus

underpants, was found lying on her back against a barbed-wire fence on Frazier Road about 7:30 a.m. Monday by a school bus driver.

She had beaten severely about the face, stabbed several times in the chest, and had bone-deep gashes cut down the length of her right leg.

She was last seen about 10:30 p.m. Sunday in Knoxville, in the area of Magnolia Avenue and Depot Street, where she apparently plied her trade, said KCSD homicide investigator Mike Upchurch.

"This is the worst kind of homicide you can work," said Upchurch, "because she came into contact with so many types from so many different walks of life."

Upchurch and KCSD detective Larry Johnson said investigators spent Monday night questioning people in the area where Hickman worked, searching for her identity and clues.

Authorities are urging anyone who saw any suspicious vehicle or persons in the area where Hickman's body was found — Frazier Road and Kodak Road — between 10 p.m. Sunday and 7 a.m. Monday to contact the Knox County Sheriff's Department.

a reporter in the midst of her grief? I have no idea. And third, how could I have ever been so callous, so insensitive, to reduce human life, human tragedy, and human suffering to a 15-inch news story? Today, I still wonder about the third question. The answer perplexes me, perhaps because I fear what it will say about me. Don't get me wrong. I value most of my experience as a reporter. I learned a lot about life. I believe that a journalist's job is important. Free speech, freedom of the press, the Constitution, and all that. I always knew, as a courts or crime reporter, that if my stories didn't appear on the front page, they would still be read, maybe more than other "front-page" news. Because people like smut. There's something about people at

their very worst that other people find fascinating.

People's fascination with crime and death is nothing new, of course. Take Jack the Ripper, for example. A hundred years ago, British newspapers carried bold headlines with lurid illustrations when Jack stalked the streets of Whitechapel, dismembering prostitutes. Today, *The Alienist* and other books about murders and serial killers top the best-seller lists; *The Silence of the Lambs* garners an Oscar for Best Motion Picture, enshrining Hannibal "the Cannibal" Lector as hero and cultural icon; *America's Most Wanted* and *Cops* fail to satisfy TV viewers' thirst for crime, for blood and guts, guaranteeing sensationalist shows like *Hard Copy* will garner high ratings.

To use a TV metaphor:

what's wrong with this picture? Science-fiction writer Harlan Ellison, one of the century's premier short-story writers, once wrote a story called "The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" about an immortal Jack the Ripper who through the ages reappears with his knife to cut his way into humanity's subconscious. In the story, Ellison describes each cut, each slice, each tracing of Jack's artful blade so graphically that the descriptions are almost too repulsive to read. Almost. Here's an example:

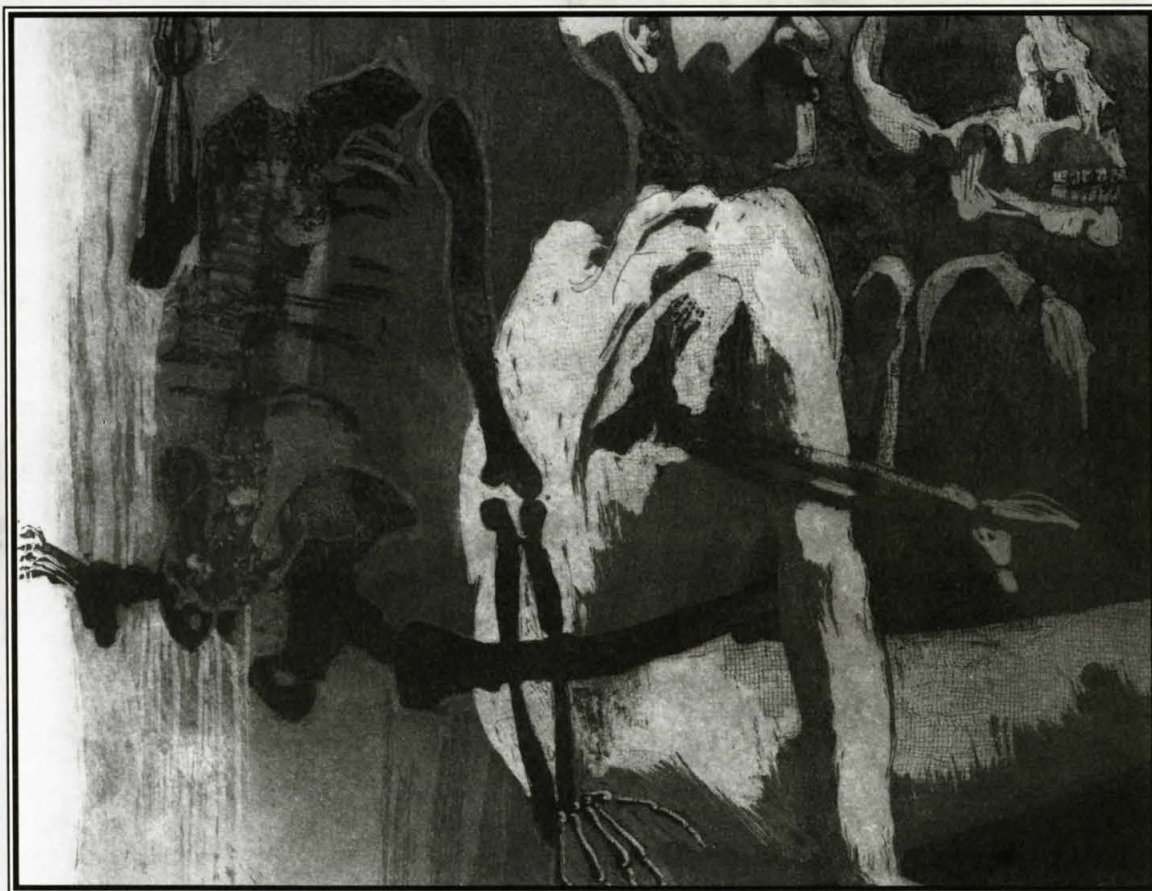
Then he sliced her. Neatly, angling the point of the scalpel into the soft flesh behind and under her left ear. *Sternocleidomastoideus*. Driving it in to the gentle crunch of cartilage giving way. Then, grasping the instrument tightly, tipping it down and drawing it across the width of the throat, following the line of the firm jaw.

Glandulae submandibularis. The blood poured out over his hands, ran thickly at first and then burst spattering past him, reaching up the far wall of the alley. Up to his sleeves, soaking his white cuffs. She made a watery rattle and sank limply in his grasp, his fingers still twisted tight in her kerchief; black abrasions where he had scored the flesh. He continued the cut up past the point of the jaw's end, and sliced into the lobe of the left ear. He lowered her to the filthy paving. She lay crumpled, and he straightened her. Then he cut away the garments laying her naked belly open to the wan and

HONORABLE MENTION
PRINTMAKING



BONES: A CELEBRATION



7 1/2" x 9 3/4"

David Ayers

flickering light of the gas standard in the street. Her belly was bloated. He started the primary cut in the hollow of her throat. *Glandulae Thyroidea*. His hand was sure as he drew a thin black line of blood down and down, between the breasts. Sternum. Cutting a deep cross in the hole of her navel. Something vaguely yellow oozed up. *Plica umbilicalis media*. Down over

the rounded hump of the belly, biting more deeply, withdrawing for a neat incision. *Mesenterium dorsale commune*. Down to the matted-with-sweat roundness of her privates. Harder here. *Vesia Urinaria*. And, finally, to the end, *Vagina*. (Ellison 143)

In an afterward to the story, Ellison admitted he lifted the description of Jack's handi-

work directly from surgical textbooks. Not to make the Ripper more realistic or monstrous. But because we, society, people, want, need, such gruesome detail. The inhabitants of Ellison's "city" experience vicariously the thrill and horror of Jack's mutilations as he performs them. In a very real way, our society also literally seems to feed off of the pain and blood of others. Just check out a copy of the gore-glutted horror-film magazine *Fangoria* or watch any Clive Barker movie. Hell, just

turn on the TV news.

Harlan Ellison, never one to pull punches, concluded an afterword to "The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" with the following four paragraphs:

The Jack I present is the Jack in all of us, of course. The Jack that tells us to stand and watch as Catherine Genovese gets knifed, the Jack that condones Vietnam because we don't care to get involved, the Jack that we need.

We are a culture that needs its monsters. We have to deify our Al Capones, our Billy the Kids, our Jesse Jameses, and all the others including Jack Ruby, General Walker, Adolf Hitler or even Richard Speck, whose Ripper-like butchery of the Chicago nurses

has already begun to be thought of as a modern legend. We are a culture that creates its killers and monsters and then provides for them the one thing that Jack was never able to have: reality. He [Jack] was a doomed man who desperately wanted to be recognized for what he had done (as consider the notes he wrote), but could not come out in the open for fear of

capture. The torn-in-two directions of a man who senses that the mob will revere him, even as they kill him.

That is the message of this story. You are the monsters (Ellison 143).

seems prophecy. The headlines, the news, the sick shit that passes for entertainment these days all bear testimony to its truth.

I only worked a few years at the *Journal*. It was valuable experience, fun and exciting. But in the end, the job was depressing. There were just too many senseless killings. The two-year-old baby who had its head cut off

by its father. Danita Martin, who denied to the day she died that her boyfriend beat her. The former Knoxville police captain whose rage was so great that she killed her husband and retarded son, hanged herself, and left her entire estate to her pet poodle. The teenage girl who blew her brains out because her father raped her. The multiple murder-suicides... The list is endless. Or it might as well be.

After a while, the murder cases all started running together. I couldn't keep them straight. During my last 120 days at the *Journal*, there were ninety "unusual deaths" — murders, murder-suicides, fire fatalities, and so on. Mostly murders, though. The names and the cases ran together, blurred, became one vast amalgam of

inhumanity, pain, and death, of headlines and deadlines, of anxiety and depression. This I know now: the business of living and dying is often bloody and painful. Looking back, I can see I got depressed. I couldn't see it then, couldn't feel it. Maybe I just shut down. I drank a lot of beer. I used drugs, too, "partying," I thought then, but now I guess I was just trying to cope. With the pain. The despair. The blood and

Slain prostitute killed by drugs, her mother says

4-20-89
BY VINCE SINGLETON
Of The Journal staff

The mother of slain Knoxville prostitute Jamie Darlene Hickman said tearfully this morning that her adopted daughter was a weak child who was overcome and killed by drugs.

"She was such a good child, until drugs took hold of her," said Judy Hickman of Seymour of her 26-year-old daughter, whose troubled life of streetwalking and drug use ended Sunday.

"Instead of saying 'Jamie,' you should say 'drugs,' because that wasn't the Jamie we knew. It just wasn't her, not the Jamie we remember."

Jamie Hickman's body, brutally beaten, stabbed and slashed, was found against a barbed-wire fence on an east Knox County road about 7:30 a.m. Monday by a passing school bus driver. A coroner's report said she bled to death.

While Knox County investigators scramble for clues, the victim's

mother and family are trying to make sense of Jamie's troubled life and tragic death.

"She tried so hard to get off the street, but she didn't have the strength," said Judy Hickman. "Her arms were full of needle marks, and she just didn't have enough strength to fight."

"She was always an emotional child. We adopted her when she was an infant, when she was 22 months old. She always had problems adjusting."

Jamie Hickman was an average student who was intelligent but had trouble communicating orally, Judy Hickman said.

"When she was about 22, she just got weak," the victim's mother said. "She couldn't handle it anymore. We tried to help her, but she wasn't strong enough. There was no way to get her off (drugs)."

She said her daughter left home about five years ago, and called pe-

Please see MOTHER, Page 15A

Is Ellison's view extreme? Hardly. Once, I may have thought so, but not anymore. Not after working at the *Knoxville Journal*. Ellison wrote "The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" nearly thirty years ago. Yet it seems to me that Ellison's observation is more true today than it was in 1967. Since, we've had John Wayne Gacy, Ted Bundy, Jeffrey Dahmer, and a host of other human monsters. Ellison's story, in retrospect,

Mother

From Page 1A

periodically to say she was in jail. Judy Hickman said her daughter never told her she was in jail for prostitution, which she didn't learn for certain until reading media accounts of her daughter's gruesome murder.

"That's not the Jamie we know," she said. "I assume the reason (she became a prostitute) was to help her buy drugs. . . . She just couldn't

face reality. She was ashamed of the life she lived, that she wasn't strong, that she had a weakness."

Her daughter had sought help with her drug problem at a rehabilitation center, she said, but even that didn't help.

Despite her daughter's lifestyle, Judy Hickman said, Jamie was a decent human being who suffered much too much.

"I don't know who did this to her," she said. "But she didn't deserve to die. She was so weak, she couldn't hurt anybody."

Judy Hickman said the family is still trying to cope with Jamie's

death, and as emotionally trying as the last few days have been, there is some small comfort.

Police on Wednesday launched a crackdown on prostitution in the area where Hickman frequented. Seventeen men were jailed on charges of solicitation for prostitution following a sting operation by Metro Organized Crime. A few also were charged with drug and firearms violations.

Most of those arrested remained in the Knox County Jail Intake Center in lieu of \$500 bond. They all have April 26 hearings set in City Court.

the disassembled bodies. With ubiquitous, senseless death. Violent death. It seemed the whole world was dancing, as the lyric from a Tom Kimmel song has it, with one foot in the grave.

So I finally quit my job as police reporter at the *Journal* and accepted a position as Business Editor at the *Kingsport Times-News*. Not solely because of the killing, but that had a lot to do with it. I had no experience reporting business; I knew next to nothing about it. To be frank, I thought it would be an incredibly boring job. And, honestly, I had no problem with that, not after all those years covering courts and crime. I thought I could stand a little boredom in my life. Hell, I longed for some boredom. A routine, humdrum day, with no sirens or ambulances or bodies, no blood or anguish or pain. My jobs had been interesting, sure; but the ancient Chinese curse is that one may live in interesting times. So, maybe, to paraphrase Ecclesiastes, there really is nothing new under the

sun. Maybe people are still the same, human nature never changes, curiosity killed the cat, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, and reporters and cops and social workers and teachers still burn out despite their best intentions. I did. And I'm okay with it, now, with that other me who used to chase ambulances and believed free speech justified invasion of privacy, that public records were public and damn well would be produced. I seemed to have forgotten, or maybe never really knew, that free speech carries with it responsibility: the responsibility to . . . well, act responsibly, which seems a perfect description of what I did not do in Knoxville, or maybe stopped doing somewhere along the way. But I know this, now: I have changed. And that gives me hope, because if I can change, other people can too. Everyone can. You can. I find that thought comforting, a ray of sunshine in my memory of a darker world.

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Vince Singleton

PHOTOGRAPHY



ACANTHUS



9 1/2" x 6 1/4"

Margarita Casanova

HONORABLE MENTION
POETRY



MALL ROMANCE

I met her at the Shoe Garden section of Mall World,
And we had a sizzling two-hour love affair
That sprawled across the acres of the upper and lower decks,
But I'm getting ahead of myself.

When I first saw her, she was sitting on the edge of the
upper deck, outside the Shoe Garden,
Pondering the true meaning of the universe as expressed in the
thoughtful depths of the mall fountain,
And I was the first person to whom she expressed her views
As she grabbed me and drug me to that heart of darkness
Known as the food court, sat me into a plastic chair,
And told me that the fountain had told her
That there is no fighting
The mall mentality
Because it has already won.
I offered her a pog as consolation
And she stuffed it quite sensually into her Doc Martens.
Running a black-nailed hand through her bleached-red hair,
She decided that I was a kindred spirit,
And told me so.

She introduced me to a shadow
That cleaned tables
Whose name was Squirrel.
She showed me her favorite t-shirts
At the incense booth
And her favorite books
In NovelNovelNovel, the triple-book store
That carried only trilogies.
She gave me the best ring shoplifting could buy
As a token of our long-term affair
(One hour and twelve minutes at the time).

We made out on the escalators,
Made love on the glass-walled elevators,
And tested the bedsprings in Sears, Penney's, Profitt's, and
All-A-Buck.

PHOTOGRAPHY



TALKIN' IT OUT



8" x 10"

Jason Johnson

We shared big cookies, caramel-banana popcorn, and a cassingle
Over a soft-porn action figure
(Anatomically-correct, from Toy Barn, only \$19.95)
And we talked about our future:
Video games, mall cops, card stores, cineplexes.
But our relationship was doomed, and we both knew it,
Because the mall always closes,
And mall rats don't stay in packs
After they leave those tunnels.

We tried to hold on to our remaining time together,
But it was over all too quickly,
And we had to depart.
Her eyes glistened as she got into her mom's car
As though she might be crying, or her contacts might be irritating her,
And I gave her a romance card that I'd lifted earlier
and signed in the bathroom.
She smiled slightly, and I kissed her pierced lip
One last time before the car pulled away
From that mall-society romance
That I'll never forget.

Bill Abbott

POETRY



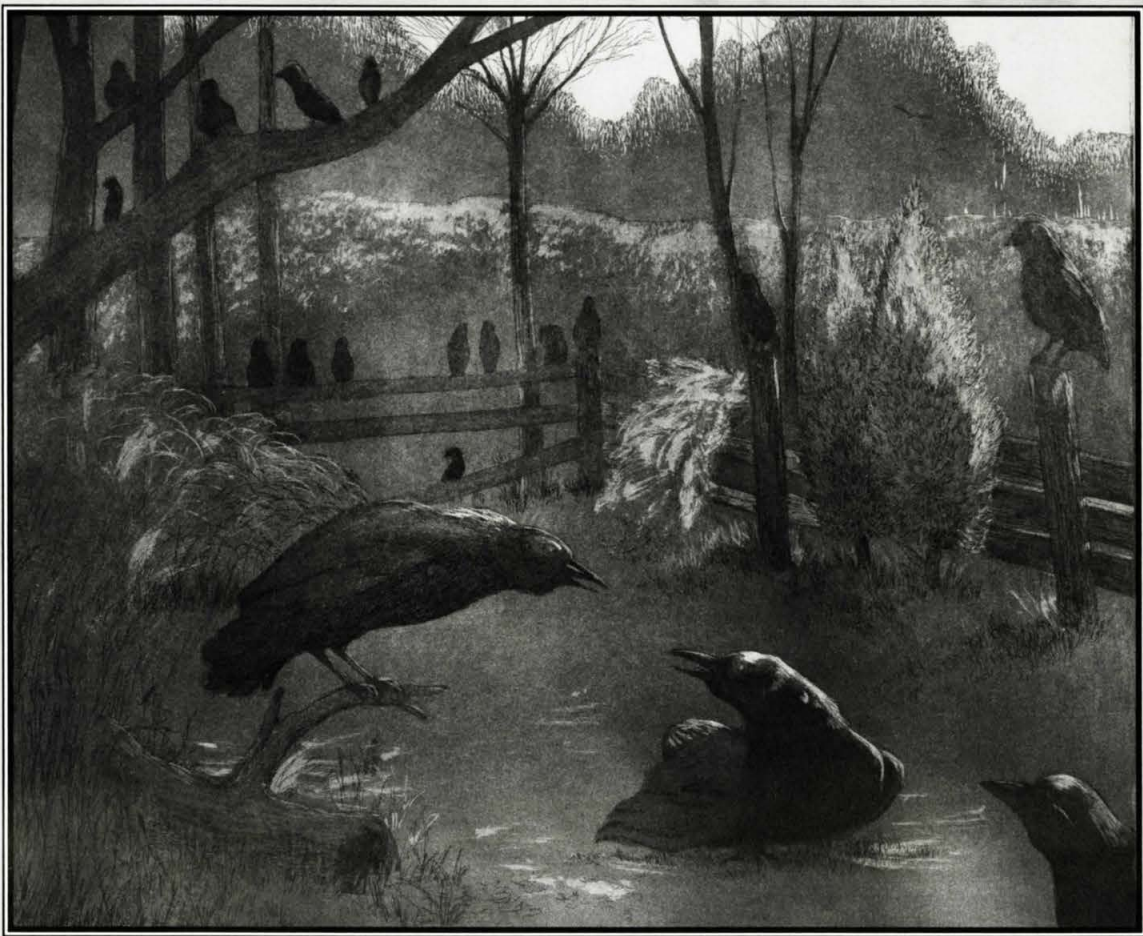
Orange fires skirt golden boughs,
As they try valiantly to conquer
in this pre-medieval farce.
Yellow and red banners
Wave gallantly for their warring lords,
Who fight for the conquest of the season.
Green, the first victim,
Shoots its life-force
As it slowly loses to its
Brown brother.
Golden boughs slowly
Reach to the cool, cloudless sky
As it patiently awaits the coming
Dead Season's forces.
Brown brother slowly prays
Good-bye to the God-soaring sky,
And gently falls
To the lifeless ground.
Autumn's valiant soldiers fight
Restlessly for supremacy
In their endeavor against unyielding Summer
In an everlasting battle
Only to succumb to the white truce
Of Winter.

Sharon Clark

INTAGLIO



THE COMMITTEE



15 1/4" x 19"

Michael Durham

SILKSCREEN



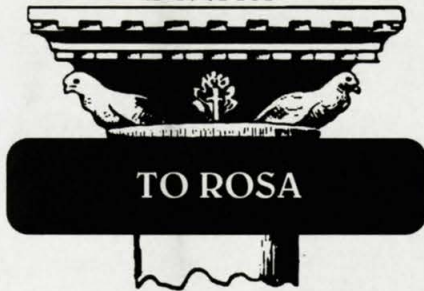
LIMBS



10 5/16" x 8 1/2"

Kary Thomas

POETRY

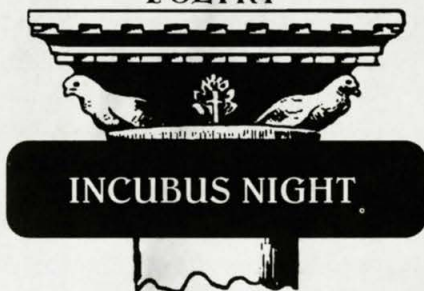


TO ROSA

The bus rolls on,
 she sits and thinks,
Passes the slums,
 she sits and cries
Into downtown,
 she sits and stares
Up to the mansions,
 she sits, fist clinched,
Rolls back through town,
 she sits and relaxes,
Passes the factories,
 she sits and dreams:
“Give me your seat girl,”
 she sits and smiles.

Jeff McAfee

POETRY

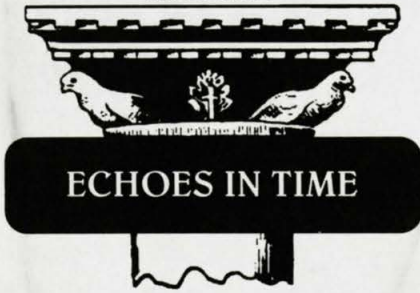


INCUBUS NIGHT

This is what the grass took
above a quarry of shadbones
stuttering and slandered like a musician
tuning taunt strings to tie down the sun.
This is how the grass took
memories of heels in turf
smells of cuttings bound with twine
a season curled up like toes
or pansies to the frost.
This is why the grass took
like a snail, like a snake
coiled out and forgetting
it dangles in reeds —
always a clipping, always a clipping.

Scott Honeycutt

SECOND PLACE
FICTION



Annie Tumein rubbed one finger on the tarnished steel body of the pocket watch stuffed deep in the left, front pocket of her linen pants. Its heft thumped against her leg with every other step. She thought of how special it had been to her when she first bought it, though that feeling seemed strangely sentimental to her now. That was nine years ago, back in 1972, she thought, right after I got here. I used my entire first paycheck to pay for this thing.

Rolex it wasn't. But it was all she'd been able to afford when she arrived in La Hora. It was good enough for her to make sure she'd never be late to the only regular job she'd ever held. And, she mused, it was good enough to make sure those bastards at 3rd Street Bellworks never tricked her into free overtime. Naive at first, she thought, but I learned fast.

After leaving it in a drawer for several years, Annie had run across the watch again. She examined it, noticing that it read exactly four o' clock, and tried to wind it. Time, when it has been neglected, can become quite indignant. As Annie twisted the dial, the watch purred smooth, steady clicks for about five turns. On the sixth, the snap and buzz of a spring uncoiling inside told Annie that she'd left the watch untended for too many years. She took it,

and heard the tiny parts inside rattle, held it to her ear, and heard only silence.

Annie remained unsure why she was taking it to have it repaired. It had nothing to do with any emotional attachment. In fact, she was sure she didn't feel at all sentimental about it. It definitely didn't have anything to do with any need to keep on a tight schedule. She'd quit her job shortly after learning she was pregnant with Locke, and she wasn't even sure she'd recognize a schedule now if someone walked her through one. With a five-year-old, I'm lucky if I can take a piss when I want to, she thought. No, I just want to know what time it is.

With her husband at work at least seven hours a day on the long days she spent at home with Locke, time tiptoed by her without allowing itself to be recognized. It'd be nice to realize and savor the time I spend with my son, she decided. That's plenty enough reason to have it fixed.

Annie had had her husband, J.A., call the watch repair shop earlier in the day to check on getting it repaired. J.A.'s proper name was Justin Aubrey Tumein. "Justin is way too stuffy," she'd told him soon after they met, eight years ago. "From now on, you're J.A."

From the watch shop, the proprietor had chortled over the phone at J.A. and said, "A Sinto watch, you say?" He caught his breath. "We don't get a terrible lot a repair requests on *that* brand." He let out another little snort. "Most people just throw 'em away when they quit tickin' . . . which they always do. But, if you're dead set on gettin' it fixed, I'm pretty sure I got enough parts from old, broke trade-ins to get it runnin' again. I got at least nine of 'em here. As for how long it'll stay runnin', I ain't gonna say."

He let out a short cough, and straightened his tone. "But go ahead and bring it by when you come downtown."

J.A. had thanked him, then asked, "Do you think you'll have time to fix it today?"

J.A. heard a little snort through the ear piece, like the man had let a small, breathy laugh escape into the receiver. The man answered, almost sarcastically, "I'm pretty busy, but I think I can fit you in. Prob'ly be here 'til at least ten tonight." With that, J.A. had let him know they'd be in, in the afternoon and hung up the phone.

Annie looped an arm through J.A.'s crooked elbow, and steered him into the alley toward the watch shop. Locke trailed quickly behind them. Annie turned to J.A., then looked back at Locke and smiled. Lifting her head again as they neared a plain-looking shop front, she said, "Well, it sure doesn't look like much, but I'm pretty sure this is the place we're looking for." She pulled the watch out and held it up. "It's too bad the old watch shop I got this from isn't there anymore. You remember it, don't you? The one by that church on 11th Street. When I bought this there, the old guy that ran the place told me if I ever had any problems with it, he'd fix it for half price. I think that ole geezer was kinda sweet on me too. I bet this place'll charge an arm and a leg." She dropped the watch back into her left pocket.

"Mhmmm," J.A. grunted, politely acknowledging her, as if he'd been paying attention.

Locke slipped into the ticking, clicking shop between his parents as J.A. heaved open the heavy wooden door, hung hard and tight on rusted hinges. Three shiny screws held a small bell on a bouncing arm clipped to the top

LITHOGRAPHY



UNINVITED GUEST



30" x 19"

Sierra Merrell

of the door. It chimed their entrance. And chimed and chimed and chimed. J.A. grimaced, and, after shutting out the noise that echoed down the alley from the street, reached up and stilled the jingling annoyance. He glanced around the store, noticing that all of the clocks read twelve sharp. A few hours behind, he mused.

Once inside, they moved toward the glass counter top, behind which stood a shopkeeper, intensely occupied by something on a workbench. Though his back was turned, they could see he was quite old. Bent over his work, his shoulders hunched under a faded red smock. A bright table lamp shone down on the object that held his attention. He stooped there steady-still, almost trance-like in his concentration.

"Excuse me," J.A. called, in almost a whisper, to the stooping figure at the workbench. No response. He cleared his throat. Once again, a little louder, he called to the watchmaker. "Hello." Not even a twitch. Again, he cleared his throat, this time deeply and heavily. J.A. was ready to holler across the glass display counter to the seemingly deaf old man. As he drew a deep breath, the man moved his left arm slowly out to his side and held up a finger, looking a bit like he was pointing to the ceiling. But J.A. understood the man's gesture to mean "just-a-minute," and stifled his shout.

The man at the bench still didn't say a word, didn't even shift in place. His right hand never moved, and once he knew his signal was understood, he returned his left hand to its task, a task still unseen by J.A. and Annie—and Locke. Annie glanced over at J.A. with a confused expression. J.A. replied with a quick shrug of the shoulders, and returned a look that mirrored Annie's.

Perplexed and distracted, neither J.A. nor Annie had seen Locke slinking around the back side of the display counter. The next time they noticed him, he was popping up at the watchmaker's side in front of them. Locke tugged at the wrinkled shirt tail hanging loosely over the back of the man's trousers under the faded smock. The man didn't budge. Out of Annie's reach, Locke tugged again. Still undisturbed, the watchmaker let out only a friendly grunt and continued his work.

Locke, face twisted like a freshly-rung dish rag, looked up at the man and asked, "Howfum. . . whatcor . . . I mean why, why are you doin' that with that. . . uh. . . that thing?"

A gently smiling face, finally recognizing Locke's presence, peered down at him from its perch atop that stooping body by the workbench. The withered face pursed its lips, let out a soothing "Shhhh," and turned back to look again toward the bench top.

"Locke!" pleaded Annie, "get back . . ."

"It's quite alright," interrupted the watchmaker without turning around, "I'll be just a coupla' seconds more . . ." He discreetly flipped a large red switch on the contraption in front of him.

For just a fraction of a second, Annie could swear she saw a bright light flash from the hidden object in front of the man. She shook her head, dismissing the thought.

Still not turning around, the dilapidated old-timer shifted his weight a bit, rotated the stiffness out of his ancient shoulders, and continued, "And the boy will be quiet. I'm pretty sure a that."

Locke relaxed. He seemed mysteriously soothed. He stood more still than Annie had remembered seeing him in a long time.

The watchmaker's hunched body slackened a bit. Scratching the edge of a puddle-brown liver spot at the crown of his bald head, he let out a deep, satisfied sigh, and slowly turned around to Annie and J.A. His grin matched the upturned wrinkles in his high, shining forehead.

"Did you get it fixed?" Annie asked.

"Huh?" The old man pretended a puzzled look, as if caught off guard.

"The watch. Did you fix the watch you were working on?"

"I wasn't fixin' a watch," he giped, still blocking Annie and J.A.'s view of the bench.

"A clock then. You were working on a clock?"

"Nope, not a clock," he chuckled. "Not really, anyway."

Annie noticed Locke. Still standing near the workbench, he was staring behind the watchmaker at the benchtop. His mouth was a cavern of silence, agape and quiet. His eyes were fixed, motionless but alive, like he'd been dropped into strange surroundings, and couldn't quite figure them out. The old man reached over and gently patted Locke's head, breaking his awe-struck stare. Locke smiled up at the man. Calmly, almost maturely, the boy nodded his head at him. "That was fun," Locke whispered.

The man rocked his head to and fro, pulled a satiny, blue cloth from his shirt pocket, and turned his back again on Annie and J.A. He remained turned for only an instant. He billowed the scarf over his head, then let it settle on the still-hidden object. His work draped, he turned and moved from behind the counter, leaving Locke behind his back.

Locke's left hand was balled into a fist. With his right hand, he started to reach for the shiny, sky-colored cloth. When he

caught the glare in his mother's eyes, he changed his mind, frowned, and pulled his arm back. Without turning around, the old man spoke to Locke. "I thought we were gonna trust each other."

"We . . . we are, I guess," replied Locke in a quiet voice. "I'm sorry."

"No need to be sorry, young man, just be forthright."

"Excuse me," Annie interrupted, "I'm not quite sure I know what you two are talking about. Have we met somewhere before?"

"No, I'm pretty sure you and I ain't met. 'Least not recently, anyhow," replied the old man.

"You've met Locke then?"

"Yeah, kinda. Say!" the old man exclaimed, obviously turning the conversation, "Don't ya have a watch that needs fixin'?"

"I'm just as curious as you seem to be," J.A. broke in, looking at Annie, "but I think what Mr. uh . . . uh, I don't believe I caught your name."

"Speingopt. Tim Speingopt."

J.A. furled his smooth brow into an inquisitive wrinkle.

"'Spine-Go'," the old man pronounced, then nodded his head, as if telling J.A. that he'd heard correctly and should continue talking.

"What I think..."

Speingopt?..." The old man nodded again. "What Mr. Speingopt was trying to say is that he's known lots of children. He knows Locke in that sense. Anyway, we do have a few other errands to run today."

"You're right. I'm sorry," Annie acknowledged.

"Well, lemme see it," the watchmaker said.

"What? Huh?" Annie asked in a nebulous tone, as if she'd forgotten why she was even there. Then, "Oh, the watch!" I'm

sorry I don't know where my mind was; it just sorta wandered there for a minute."

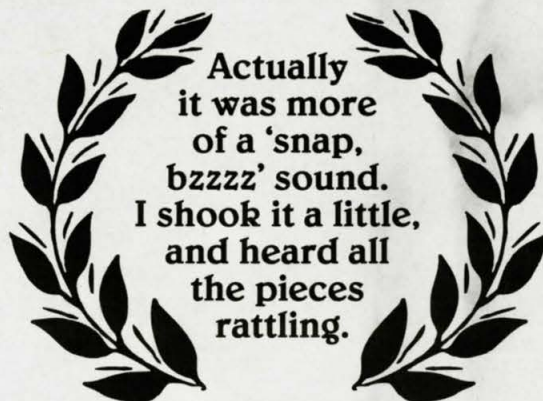
"Quite alright, young lady."

Annie's hand fidgeted in her left, front pocket, where she was certain she'd put the watch. "Oh, uh, I'm sorry. I know it's here somewhere."

"No need to be apologetic, young lady. Take your time. I got all the time in the world."

Annie patted the outside of her right pocket and felt the outline of the watch pressed against her leg. "Here it is. I was sure it was in the other pocket. I guess I must have shoved it in here, not paying attention."

"Prob'ly so." The old man



smiled. "Lemme take a look at it."

"Here." Annie handed him the watch. It seemed shinier than she remembered.

"What sorta problems've you been havin' with it?"

"Problems? Mainly, that it doesn't run at all. I'd say that's the main thing," she huffed.

"Mhmmm." He curtly nodded, with his chin struck forward like he was holding back a grin.

"But, more specifically? I took it out of the drawer it's been sitting in forever, then, when I tried to wind it, it just kind of went 'kerplooeey.' Actually, it was more of a 'snap, bzzzz' sound. I

shook it a little, and heard all the pieces rattling. I figured it was reason enough to bring it in."

"Well, I'd certainly be glad to take a look at it. But, at first glance, there doesn't seem to be anything wrong with it."

Annie cast him a confused look.

His face grew a little more serious, in an almost mocking way. He placed his left hand on his hip, and raised the watch to his ear. He closed his eyes so tightly the scrunched-up lids looked like fat, folded raisin skins, and he bobbed his head in rhythm. With one hand, Locke had grabbed the old man's pants leg, and stood there holding on, suspiciously quiet. The boy's other hand was dropped down at his side.

J.A., seeing that the old man was patronizing Annie (toying with her anyway) walked over to a rickety bar stool shoved up against the sales counter, pulled it out, and sat down. Mindlessly grinning, and shaking his head, he picked up a small watch part from a scattered pile of like pieces lying next to a clunky old cash register and a bright-green notepad. He twiddled it between his thumb and forefinger, rolling it back and forth, and then tapped it on the glass counter top. Glancing down at his hand, he smiled at the object he'd picked up—a short, fragile piece of brass with a tiny point at one end and a little round hole at the other. I've got a hand in my hand, he thought, almost laughing out loud at his own bad joke.

"Seems like it's tickin' right along," said the watchmaker, raising his eyebrows and flattening his face. He then stretched his baggy skin into a taut, enthusiastic smile. Opening his eyes to the size of quarters, he held the watch out to Annie between his thumb and forefinger. She eased it out

from between his fingers and raised it to her eyes. She could clearly see the second hand sweeping its way around the dial, but couldn't make any sense of the murky ideas stumbling through her head. She held the watch to her ear—as if that it ticked, and not that it actually showed the time, was what was important. Though she didn't know why—because she knew she'd seen the hands move—she was shocked to hear the quiet snare rhythm of the timepiece as the smooth, steel case cooled her earlobe.

"But . . . I could've sworn it wasn't working when I looked at it this morning."

"I tell ya what. How 'bout if I just hang on to it, take another look, and you can come back later this week to pick it up? That way, if there is somethin' wrong with it, I oughta be able to find it before you come back."

"Fine by me," J.A. interrupted again. "We've got other things to do today. Why don't you just let him keep it for a week or so, Annie? How about next weekend, Mr. Speingopt? If we stop by next Saturday, will you have had time to check it out thoroughly?"

"Oh yeah. I think that'll be plenty a time."

Annie extended the watch to the old man. After he retrieved it from her, she dropped her hand down to Locke's head. He was still hanging on the watchmaker's pant leg. "Looks like you've found a friend," she said to the old man. Then, to Locke, "We've gotta go now. You can come back with us next week, hon. Say goodbye to Mr. Speingopt."

Locke reluctantly released his hold on the man's pants, and took his mother's left hand. J.A. lifted himself to his feet from the barstool and laid the watch part back on the glass counter. He

walked over to the end of the counter, and shook the watchmaker's hand. "By the way, my name's Justin. Most people call me J.A. This is Annie," he said looking over at Annie. Annie nodded to the old man and smiled. "And it almost seems like you already know Locke." J.A. and Speingopt both grinned down at Locke, and got a grin in return.

J.A. joined Annie and Locke in front of the door. With a silent, forlorn smile Locke finger-waved to the old man. J.A. let his hand settle gently on his wife's back, and steered her and Locke out the door.

"Thank you for your time Mr. Speingopt," Annie said. "See you next week." Annie turned, with Locke in tow, and walked out. The two headed to the street.

"Goodbye." The old man gave a weak wave. "I'll see you Saturday, right?"

"Next Saturday," J.A. answered, as he followed his family outside. He stepped into the alley, the door closed behind him, and he saw Locke and Annie already well on their way out to the main thoroughfare.

As soon as J.A. was fully out of the shop, the old man shook his head. Tim Speingopt let out a hushed, wry "Hmph!," then laughed aloud, and walked over to two old, wooden trays sitting beside one another on a shelf. One was marked IN—FOR REPAIR, the other OUT—REPAIRED. He let out another little laugh, and, shaking his head, laid the silver pocket watch in the one marked OUT—REPAIRED.

He walked back behind the counter again, and pulled the satin cloth off of his hidden contrivance. The removal of the cloth revealed a device built of literally thousands of watch parts: hands, dials, cases, cogs, and springs. On the front was a cluster of ten

knobs, two rows of five each. Each knob was marked with its own separate label. The labels read: SECONDS, MINUTES, HOURS, DAYS, WEEKS, MONTHS, YEARS, DECADES, CENTURIES, and EONS. Also on the front, above the two rows of knobs, was one large dial with four settings marked around it: NORMAL, FORWARD, BACK, and STOP. Beside the large dial was a large red switch marked ENGAGE. The phone rang, and, without redraping the gleaming, gold and silver machine on the workbench, the old man strolled to the end of the counter to answer it.

J.A. had taken about ten steps from the shop, just about catching up with Annie and Locke. Shit!, he thought, a receipt. I forgot to get a receipt for the watch. "Just a minute," he called, holding up a finger. "Be right back." He turned to head back into the store.

Pushing hard on the stiff-hinged door, he jarred it open, and stepped back into the shop. Something about it seemed unusually quiet, like something was missing. The clocks were ticking and chiming away, but something was not. He looked all around, as if he might see the sound that wasn't there. What he did see was a surprised old man dropping a telephone.

The watchmaker dropped the phone right onto the hard cement floor of the shop, shattering the ear piece. He was a blur behind the glass counter as he raced the four steps back to cover his machine. Though still a bit startled and flustered, he managed to get the blue kerchief back over the contraption before J.A. had a chance to focus his eyes on it.

"Uh . . . what? . . . uh . . . never mind," J.A. mumbled, mixed-up by what he was seeing.

DRAWING



UNTITLED



11 15/16" x 8 15/16"

Bev Steele

"I just came back for a receipt. Didn't mean to scare you. You okay?"

"Oh yeah," the old man said, panting, "you just startled me, that's all." Evasively, he offered, "Let me get that receipt for ya." Without making eye contact, he wrote out the receipt and handed it to J.A.

"Thanks. See you next week." J.A.'s suspicious tone was obvious. He walked back to the door, which was again stuck slightly in its frame. He had to

jerk a bit to get it open. As the frame released its grip on the door, and the door jumped open toward him, a light clicked on in his head. The bell! That's what's missing. I could swear there was a bell on this door when I came in the first time.

With his face screwed into a knot of curiosity, J.A. stepped back into the alley. Damn, that's really weird, he thought. He lowered and shook his head a little, and shrugged his shoulders, as if that excused him from any further

thought on the subject. He looked up again, smiling at Locke and Annie, and trotted back towards the street-rumbling, open end of the alley.

As J.A. approached, he noticed Locke's left hand balled into a tight fist. "Say, little man," he asked, "what's that you've got in your hand?"

Locke buried his left hand as deep into his pocket as he could get it. Offering his father his right hand, he extended it in front of him, fingers spread wide.

"Nothin', see?" he pled. They all stopped at the end of the alley, facing the street.

"What is it, J.A.? What's he got?" Annie asked, looking first down at Locke, then back up at J.A.

"I don't know, but I think he picked something up in that shop."

Annie's tone grew terse and sharp. "Claudio Locke Tumein, let me see your other hand, and let me see it now!"

Locke bowed his head. Twisting his whole body and shuffling his feet as he did it, he painstakingly pulled his left hand out of his pants pocket, unraveling his fist as he did. He looked back up, first to Mom, then to Dad. "Look," he said, holding out both palms for inspection, "Nothin'. See?" A sly, self-satisfied smile came to his lips.

J.A. could probably have played Locke's game all day, perhaps even fallen for it. But Annie, she was another story. Growing tired of his pretense, Annie reached over, gently but firmly grabbed Locke's outstretched wrists, and frowned up at J.A. "Well! Don't just stand there; check out his pocket."

At first J.A. really didn't understand. He was actually still thinking about the bell he was trying not to think about. Then he realized what she was implying. Locke had dropped whatever he had into his pocket. I've really got to spend more time with him, J.A. thought. I can't believe he almost got that one over on me. J.A. kneeled, and reached down to

search his son's pocket, all the while giving him a sort of "I'm-sorry-she's-making-me-do-it" look straight into his five-year-old eyes—for which all he got in return was a stare that cried, "Traitor!"

As J.A.'s big, clumsy hand dug down into the tight front pocket of his son's jeans, he touched first one, then two, then three familiar-feeling objects. When he got a decent grip on the objects, squeezing them between the first two joints of his fingers, he

began to realize what he had in his hand. The edged spirals dug into his fingers, and the sharp point of one of the objects pricked at his skin. As he pulled them out, and got his first glimpse, his "I'm-sorry" face turned to raw astonishment. Dumbfounded, he gave Locke an incredulous, questioning stare, then gazed emptily up at Annie. She recognized the utter confusion in his expression.

"What? What did you find?" Annie begged, worried and muddled.

J.A. said nothing, just held his gaze, and held out his hand, unrolling his fingers completely, and flattening his palm. In his hand, bright and sharp, there lay three shiny screws.

Annie cocked her head to one side, took the screws from J.A.'s hand, and asked, "Are you okay? You look like you've seen a ghost." She helped him to his feet. He still didn't utter a word. She looked down at her son.

Locke pouted his bottom lip, put his arms akimbo, and shrugged. "Um. . . I don't know?"

the little boy tried, hoping that would somehow answer her unasked question.

At once, J.A. snapped back into coherence, and grabbed both Annie's and Locke's hands. Turning around, and pulling them both back down the alley with him, he began to run. They almost ran right by it. There, where the watch shop had stood, was just a weathered facade with boarded up windows and a piece of thick plate steel welded where the door had been. A sign bolted to the steel read:

**Speingopt Watch Repair
Has Moved
New Location at 730 11th St.
Beside 1st Victory Chapel
Effective August 9, 1965**

Sitting on a brick sill, in front of the left-side boarded window frame was a small box, about three inches square. Taped to the box was a note scrawled on bright green paper that read "For Annie." J.A. picked up and opened the box. Inside was Annie's watch, shining and ticking true. J.A. opened the watch, stared at it in disbelief, and slowly handed it to Annie. She stood by, speechless, shaking and shaken, hopelessly unclear about what was happening. J.A. was beginning to understand. Locke just smiled.

In a trembling voice, Annie read aloud the fresh inscription on the inside of the watch's cover:

Time stops for few men.

Always,

TS"

Jason Johnson

WOODCUT



AMALGAMATE

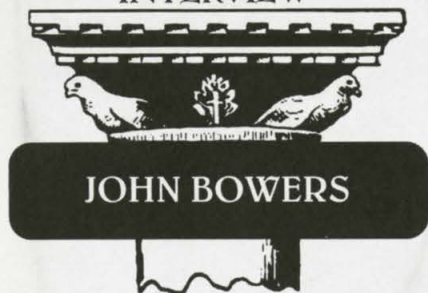


8 5/8" x 11 3/4"

Kary Thomas



INTERVIEW



One Acquainted with the Craft: An Interview with John Bowers

John Bowers is a native of Johnson City, Tennessee. While growing up in East Tennessee, he became interested in literature at a very young age. Young Bowers was encouraged by his mother and aunt to become a permanent resident of the literary world.

After graduating from high school, Bowers attended the University of Tennessee and earned a bachelor's degree in English. He then began a writing career and has had more than 200 essays, articles, and stories published in magazines, such as *Harper's*, *Playboy*, *The New York Times*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Village Voice*, *Sports Illustrated*, and others. The East Tennessee native is also the author of seven published books, including *The Colony*, *In the Land of Nyx*, *Stonewall Jackson: Portrait of a Soldier*, and *Chickamauga/Chattanooga: The Battles that Doomed the Confederacy*.

Bowers is a writer of non-fiction, memoir, fiction, and history, and a teacher. He teaches writing courses at New York's Columbia University and served as Basler Chair in ETSU's College of Arts and Sciences during the Fall 1996 semester.

The charismatic writer stated, "Someone once said that I write with a twinkle in my eye." Although he wasn't writing at the time, Mockingbird witnessed Bowers' twinkling eyes and friendly smile during an interview with him on the cold, windy afternoon of Wednesday, November 13, 1996.

Mockingbird: While growing up in East Tennessee did you have your mind set on being a writer? Did you have an epiphany?

John Bowers: It came to me very early that a writer's life was about as good as it could get. The actual impetus to be a writer came, I think, from being in a home where my mother and my aunt, who lived with us, were pretty literary and books and literature were all over the place. Literature and writing were highly prized. So it was natural perhaps that I soon played around with the notion of becoming a writer myself. First off, in my boy's mind, I figured a writer could go anywhere. Well, it turns out that somehow I have. As a boy, I thought, too, of all the wacky and interesting people I might meet as a writer. Well, I've met my share—and, with some hindsight, might say a few were better left alone. I've found that, if you have the disposition to be a writer and study your craft, you can exchange ideas with some very intelligent people whether they be in jail or president, highly paid jocks or some oil-riggers in the Gulf of Mexico. You can converse with bank robbers and beauty queens. And I have. When I was growing up, it was inculcated into a lot of us that to become, say, a doctor was about as high a station as mortal might attain. And perhaps it is—if you have the calling and are good at it. The practice of

medicine can be an art. But I think one is misguided if he or she gets into it—or any other lauded profession—for the sake of dough and sheer prestige. But medicine and writing aren't mutually exclusive. Chekhov, one of the greatest writers of all time, was a doctor. Somerset Maugham began as a doctor. But I took another path, as Robert Frost's poem has it.

MB: Which writers influenced you as you were growing up?

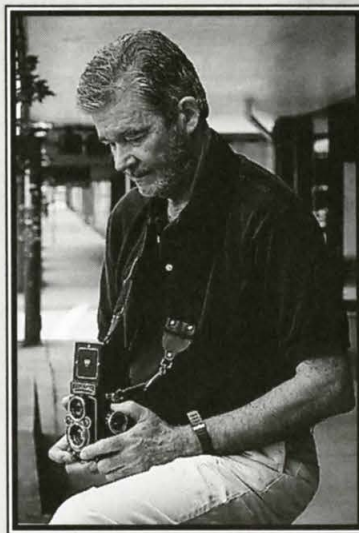
JB: My mother read Dr. Doolittle books to me before I could read myself. I became so impressed with the magic that I used to take a book, sit down importantly in an easy chair, and nod my head sagely over pages I couldn't understand. When I learned to read, I was introduced to a bevy of young boy literature by Jahasza Jeffries, librarian of North Side Grammar School, who later married a relative of the writer Peter Taylor. I distinctly remember one book she turned me onto: *T-Model Tommy*. It was about a young man who bought a broken down T-Model Ford, fixed it up, then began making money delivering goods for farmers and merchants. He expanded by buying other T-Models and hiring drivers to work for him. It was the old entrepreneurial success story. I fell head over heels for it. I saved up and bought a few boxes of candy at a wholesale warehouse here in Johnson City and then sold retail to classmates at North Side. I opened a soda pop stand at the corner of Boone and Watauga. I ended up more in the red than in the black because I ate and drank all my profits and then some. My father got a big kick out of that. Needless to say, I never became T-Model Tommy. I read cowboy stories, especially those by Will James. I became enamored of

cowboy life and wrote to ranches in Texas asking if they needed any help. The replies were polite but suggested that it might not be the best idea to drop out of grade school and hop a train for the panhandle. From our library at home, I went on to read *Vanity Fair*, O. Henry, novels by T.S. Stribling from Tennessee. *Teeftallow* particularly impressed me, for two people were depicted actually making love. It was the first time I saw it in a book. I nearly went crazy with ecstasy. My folks gave me a complete set of Dickens and I read every book. David Copperfield really got to me as did *A Tale of Two Cities*. I still remember the spots in the house and in our backyard where I read certain sections. In Junior High, Cora Mae Croquette introduced me to Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *The Lady in the Lake* and they cast their spell over me. What romances! Margaret Dugger taught English at Science Hill and was a wonderful conduit to the appreciation of the English language. It may seem that I pretty much had my nose in a book all the time back then, but I did find time to get in an awful lot of mischief somehow.

MB: You have interviewed many famous people, such as Andy Warhol, Janis Joplin, and Truman Capote. Which person was the most unforgettable?

JB: I have forgotten few of the people I've interviewed. Some I consider geniuses—certainly they were memorable. Truman Capote was short, sharp as a tack, and had an astounding memory. Duke Ellington was a musical genius—always working, always observing. George Ballanchine, the famed choreographer, seemed to know a little bit about everything. He was eternally curious, like a

child. Janis Joplin was interesting but not so that you would want to spend a cross-country bus trip with her. Janis suffered an unfortunate death and so did the lovely and completely sweet Sharon Tate. Andy Warhol was the total opposite of Joplin. He never did anything outrageous personally, but he drove everyone around him into outrageous acts simply by standing mute, looking someone in the eye, and seemingly daring that person to make him come alive. He was an astute businessman, by the way. He could sell refrigerators to Eskimos.



MB: In the introduction to *The Golden Bowers*, you discuss your “apocalyptic moment” at the Washington Press Club when you heard several journalists discussing a world leader—not the daily agonizing decisions or political pressure that the man endured—but who he was currently bedding. What did you think of professional writers before that moment, and did it change your thoughts of them?

JB: The world leader, incidently, was JFK before he became the JFK we know today. That moment in the Press Club humanized reporters for me—also world leaders—and encouraged me to

use narrative techniques in journalism. Before, I had thought reporters went around thinking about the five w's and all the important issues of the day, like when was the atomic bomb going to fall. I was interested in the human side of the news, in finding out what made people tick.

MB: Robert Frost once wrote, “I have been one acquainted with the night.” In your non-fiction work, *In the Land of Nyx*, you state, “Lots of writers love the night.” Why do writers love the night?

JB: For one thing, you can work a day job and then write at night. Most writers aren't conventional. By writing at night, you're often leaving convention behind. I'm pretty middle-class myself. I like the comforts of a routine life. I like a clean bed, regular meals, those sorts of things—but I'm also blessed (or cursed) with a touch of the adventurer. I like to wander off the reservation, forage into the jungle. In my earlier days, I liked to step out into the night and leave my safe secure middle-class life behind. That sense of adventure has appealed to a lot of writers. Thomas Wolfe walked the streets of New York late at night, as did John O'Hara.

MB: You are working on a book about 19th- century industrialist and Civil War-era journalist Henry Villard. Why does he interest you?

JB: He landed in this country in the mid-19th century from Germany with but \$20 to his name. Plus, he spoke no English. He learned the language and became a top-notch journalist. He met Lincoln before the Lincoln-Douglas debates. He started *The Nation* magazine. He opened up

the Northwest as a railroad tycoon. He bankrolled Thomas A. Edison. He built one of the great mansions in Manhattan, one which still stands at 53rd Street and Madison. Then he lost everything. Then he recouped. His story has everything—everything, that is, but scandal. Pity there were no mistresses hidden away in the Bowery.

MB: As a professor you are familiar with many students who submit their writing to various publications. As a professional writer, what advice can you offer them?

JB: There are many more publications out there now than when I started. There are also more writer groups. In my time, a writer lived

a much more isolated life. When I was growing up here, I never met anyone who wanted to be a writer. Literally no one. Now it seems everyone wants to be one. Writers are coming out of the woodwork. There are writer workshops all over the country, too—at the University of Iowa, at Columbia where I teach, everywhere. A budding writer has ample opportunity to get feedback, if not to get in print. My advice is to keep sending things out. Don't be shy. With luck (whose importance you shouldn't underrate), you should find an editor, an agent, someone who might guide you to being in print, if you have a modicum of talent and stick to your craft. One place might reject your work.

Another might pick up on you and your writing.

MB: It depends on who's looking at your work at the time?

JB: Exactly. Magazines and book publishers change personnel all the time. Keep trying. If you do get published nationally and your work has freshness, editors and agents often come to you. They become the beseeching ones. In other words, the more success you have, the more success you have. In the final analysis, I think, the greatest trait a writer can have, excepting of course talent, is stubbornness. He or she never says uncle. Never.

Lisa Rogers

PHOTOGRAPHY



UNTITLED



6.25" x 9.50"

Margarita Casenova

MOCKINGBIRD

EDITOR'S NOTE

Jean Anoulih once wrote, "The object of art is to give life shape." *Mockingbird* has provided shape to ETSU student life since 1974. This aesthetically pleasing magazine exhibits the genuinely talented artists and writers of the student population. *Mockingbird* '97 continues to present a visual banquet to the University.

All currently enrolled East Tennessee State University students were invited to submit their creative works to this year's *Mockingbird*. The literary staff and I ranked submissions and we then sent the best entries to our judges. The judges chose the top two winners in each category. Additional works of merit are also included.

Mockingbird would not be possible without its many contributors or the art and literary judges. I would like to thank the English Department for awarding me the opportunity to be the editor of *Mockingbird* '97. My job would not have run as smoothly without the help of my literary staff and the guidance of my advisors. Also, I would like to send my gratitude to Susie McLeod and her staff at ETSU University Press for their friendly service and to Ruth Tapp and Deanna Bryant for their assistance in the English Department office. The advice of last year's editors, Nona Shepherd and Jason Johnson, has been invaluable as well.

Support received from friends is necessary for any job. It helps you get through tough days and adds prosperity to your good ones. Thank you, Mike, for all of your encouragement.

Special thanks to the ETSU Foundation and the Friends of the Reece Museum for providing the prize money for the literary and art competitions. I would also like to send special thanks to Dr. Steve Bader and the members of the Student Activities Allocations Committee for providing the funds necessary to print *Mockingbird* and to Dr. Styron Harris of the English Department for his unlimited kindness and assistance.

Lisa Rogers

ART DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The history of art teaches us that the foundations of the appreciation of art and literature for its formal aesthetic qualities are in the Classical period. For this reason, we have designed *Mockingbird* '97 to have the look and feel of this time period. Our Cover is graced by Michelangelo's *David*, who is probably the most recognizable figure of the Renaissance era, an era which is partially known for its resurgence of Classical style. As you read and enjoy our students' literary and art selections, note the numbers at the bottom of each page. Flip the pages quickly and the *mockingbird* will take you on a swift journey from start to finish.

The completion of *Mockingbird* '97 represents a labor of love for the arts and a fulfillment of the varied responsibilities placed on many shoulders. The art team composed of Martha Coley, Stephanie Chasse, and Chris Shipley made significant individual contributions towards the graphic design and layout of the *Mockingbird*. Faculty advisors, Ralph Slatton and M. Wayne Dyer, organized the submission and judging of the artwork and advised the art team on graphic design and layout aspects. *Mockingbird* '97 is both enjoyable and visually stimulating because of the contributions made by ETSU's talented artists. The artwork submitted was judged and placed by Nancy Toolan. The extra artwork selected for inclusion was chosen to demonstrate a variety of styles and media through out the pages.

Special thanks is extended to the ETSU University Press for their guidance and willingness to print *Mockingbird* '97 as we envisioned and to XPress Printing for preparing the camera-ready images.

To have been chosen as art director for the *Mockingbird* is indeed an honor. I trust the confidence placed in me has been fulfilled through this publication and that *Mockingbird* '97 exhibits the high level of excellence, ingenuity, and imagination that the previous *Mockingbird* publications have shown.

Amy Light

